Pacific School of
Religion
Berkeley, Calif.

Religion and the Modern Mind

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Edited by

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An Adventure in Religion

I. An Adventure in Religion

by Charles Champlin Cooper

I. The Background of this Book

THERE is today a marked reawakening of the interest of men in religion. A sharp challenge will meet these opening words, and yet, in any attempt to interpret the series of addresses that form the content of this book, they must be written. In our mechanistic age it would seem that such words would almost automatically be refuted; yet, men have jostled and crowded one another, hundreds strong, to get within hearing distance of the authorities whose speeches are presented here.

A cross section of the intellectual life of Pittsburgh, doctors, lawyers, judges, clergymen, professors, and business men of all kinds, came in increasing numbers until a great hotel ballroom was overcrowded, and at the last address many were content to occupy the marble steps outside the room where the address was given, or to occupy chairs hastily placed in the vestibule beyond sight

of the speaker and almost beyond hearing of his words.

Clergymen ask why such meetings were possible when these same listeners were not crowding the churches. There must have been something significant, either in the content of these addresses or in the method of approach to the subject, that interested them. If so, is it possible to discover it?

Did such "an adventure in religion" constitute merely a thrill, or was something more profound involved? Was the imagination of the men stirred, and in this stirring was there any prophetic significance as to religion and its future import for mankind?

To understand the situation, a knowledge of the background of these meetings is necessary, while something of interpretation may assist in evaluating the import of such interest.

The Hungry Club is an intellectual forum of Pittsburgh, a queer growth starting from a few men lunching together and developing into one of the great forums of the country where problems of government, international affairs, science, economics, industry, and ethics are wont to be discussed. It has no organization, no officers, no rules, constitution, or by-laws. It lives simply by the precedents that have been established through its own experience. It has no funds;

therefore, speakers give their time and often pay their own traveling expenses, which in itself removes all trace of commercialism.

Through some twenty years, at noon on busy Mondays, the men of the Hungry Club have endeavored to develop "a passion for understanding" which postulates an earnest effort to get the viewpoint of the speaker. This automatically inspires the speaker to give the best that is in him.

A brilliant governor of one of the states, a few minutes before his address at the Hungry Club, asked who the men were at a near-by table. When he was told that one was a mining engineer, one a radical atheist, one a minister, one a single-taxer, one a professor, one a business man, one a wealthy retired steel operator, and so on, he replied, "No place on earth except in this queer group could such a table of men lunch together with fellowship and understanding." That may be taken as an index of the group as a whole.

For some years past, it has been noticed that whenever any of the speakers touched, even incidentally, upon religion and philosophy, an immediate response in interest was noticeable.

Following this lead, a series of addresses on "Religion and the Modern Mind" was placed upon the program, at irregular intervals, during the season of 1928-29. This series endeavored to dis-

cover the essential meaning of religion today from the standpoint of agnosticism, science, psychology, philosophy, the Ethical Culture Movement, Judaism, and Christianity.

The reaction of the group was spontaneous and unmistakable. The speakers felt this quickening, serious interest and accepted it as a challenge. They spoke not as men defending a creed or dogma, but as students exploring the field of religion, from the standpoint of their own specialties.

Dr. Ames, on returning to Chicago, wrote as follows: "Last Monday with the Hungry Club was one of the most interesting occasions of my experience. I am greatly indebted to you for a very stimulating period of two hours with your remarkable group of men. Their intelligent interest in religion, and their very keen response, indicate to me a new expression of a rising tide of interest in religion."

The interest was also manifest in the long and earnest discussions following each address, in the letters of commendation and criticism that came to the Hungry Club, in the sermons that were preached, directly or indirectly, on the addresses and in the discussions that took place in smaller groups as they met for other purposes throughout the community.

Gradually a wider outside interest was awak-

ened, culminating in a request for the manuscripts by two great publishing-houses. The result is this volume.

When the question of publishing the addresses was considered, many problems of an unforeseen nature came to the front, the matter of royalties and payment for manuscripts among them. It became necessary for the Hungry Club to have immediately available funds for the purchase of manuscripts and for other incidental expenses. The only way that this could be done was by an advance cash sale of books to the men of the group. To the utmost surprise of everyone, some five hundred copies were sold to priests and rabbis, Protestant clergymen of all kinds, agnostics and atheists, an incident probably unparalleled in the history of religious publications.

II. Are We to Have a Spiritual Renaissance?

In addition to sketching the local background of the addresses, the other task of this chapter is to discover, if possible, anything of permanent value that might be interpreted as having some underlying significance in the universal problem of religion.

When it is considered that the hundreds of men who listened to these addresses represent the normal intellectual life of their city and, to some

extent, the normal intellectual life of the country, then the *gist* of the addresses, and of the discussions that followed them, becomes of much importance.

Without any hesitation it can be said that the most significant fact to be noted was the evident interest already described, growing throughout the series, in the problems of existence, the meaning of the universe, the explanations of science, philosophy, and religion. Whether this interest will ultimately lead to a reëmphasis of the present concept of religion, or to a restatement of religion, or to its abandonment, remains to be seen; the interest is unquestionable.

Before the series opened, I was speaking to a small group of ministers in Pittsburgh, declaring that such interest did exist. The statement was challenged, several of the ministers insisting that if it were true the interest would be seen in one way or another in an increased activity in the churches themselves; that it could not exist outside the churches. Since this adventure in religion has been followed to its end, I can only repeat the original declaration, its truth validated by this experience.

Another fact of great significance, one that I know will be open to sincere but hostile criticism

on the part of many able thinkers, is the total lack of reference on the part of both speakers and audience to the creeds and dogmas of the church today. Not once was the question of baptism, whether by immersion or by sprinkling, mentioned. Not once was the significance of a bishop laying his hand on the head of prospective clergy referred to; nor were predestination, sanctification, hell, church organization or government mentioned. No one heard of a special people chosen by God. The interest was not in the organization, nor in the statement of belief of the churches, but in the fundamental issues of what lies behind the church itself.

It seemed that creeds and dogmas were tacitly relegated to their proper place, as purely human interpretations of the divine plan, will, or mind. Thus stripped of supernatural authority, creeds cannot be used as tape measures to gauge the life of men or their worthiness from the standpoint of this or that church. Whether to the weal or woe of the church as constituted today, this fact was so clearly manifested that to ignore it would be to deny a truthful explanation of this adventure. Was there something of prophecy in this as to a new church of the future which, without the mechanical aid of creeds, would yet bind men to it as strongly as did the church of the past, through perhaps more profound and fundamental

loyalties? A simple and yet living example of this is the Hungry Club itself, which, without any organization, has been held together and has grown some twenty years, simply by deep loyalties to an ideal. Men can not live by bread alone; each man must have his credo. Both the speakers and those who entered into the discussions clearly presented their own faiths, but there was no effort to use these faiths as yard sticks.

The immensity of the universe, whether computed by the incomprehensible light-years of the astronomer or portrayed as an infinitely minute world within the atom of the physicist, was brought out again and again, but was met by a like extension in the concept of God.

In one of the discussions in a smaller group during this time a gentleman stated that if one could ride on a comet through this universe he might pass through it entirely and yet miss the little speck called the Earth. Bishop McConnell made the pertinent reply, "That is true, but if one should say that there were an intelligence on the Earth that could weigh the comet, could tell what it was made of, could compute its speed and plot its curve, then the traveler on the comet might miss the Earth, but he might also miss the most significant thing in the universe."

By several speakers, either direct or indirect

reference was made to Professor Eddington's book, *The Nature of the Physical World.* What Professor Eddington has said about religion will be questioned, but what he has said about science, with reference to religion, will be weighed as the words of a great scientist. When he insists that from the scientific standpoint one inevitably comes to the conclusion that there is another world back of the pointer readings of the scientist that cannot be measured by him, he may not advance the cause of religion beyond the point of a weak pantheism, but in a negative sense his words will mark an epoch in our thinking in that he has discredited the idea of necessary opposition between science and religion. After all, is there much difference between a universe made of Energy with a capital "E," the will of God, or a spiritual interpretation of life?

The significance of religion with respect to morals was emphasized again and again. "Oughtness" was referred to by the speakers and those who participated in the discussions. There was a common ground here, and it will be remembered that this was also a significant contribution of Professor Eddington in the book just referred to. Bishop McConnell maintained that religion by means of bold leaps knows God *by insight* rather than *by eyesight.*

As necessarily following this moral emphasis, the social implications of religion found acceptance on the part of practically all, agnostic and religionist alike. In one of the discussions, the idea was advanced that religion would be judged in the future by the revolution it caused in the individual lives of its adherents and by the revolution which these adherents would thereafter make in society.

The realization of a common purpose also characterized the series. Men seemed to touch hands across chasms that had separated religious movements for years and would separate them far into the future. It was the appreciation of this common purpose that was surprising.

In the discussion of Rabbi Goldenson's paper a young Jewish gentleman asked whether the speaker did not belong to the small liberal minority common to all religions. The Rabbi replied, "I say 'yes'—and thankfully."

I was not sure whether this young man spoke as a liberal in support of Rabbi Goldenson or as an orthodox Jew in opposition to what he said. I endeavored to reach him, but lost him in the crowd. Some weeks later, when Bishop McConnell spoke, I asked that the questioner, if he were present, would speak to me at the door. He was there, and when I made my inquiry he replied,

"The answer is, I am here today to enjoy and appreciate Bishop McConnell. I am interested in the liberal minority of all religions."

In inaugurating the Ethical Culture Movement Dr. Felix Adler endeavored to find a philosophy more fundamental than that of Judaism or Christianity, and to bring to some fruition the common purpose of all religious interest. This movement, now some fifty years old, advancing slowly but with deep concern for the fullness of life for mankind, will probably have a contribution of worth to make to the religion of the future.

When Bishop McConnell was transferred from Pittsburgh to New York, Rabbi Goldenson, speaking at a farewell meeting in one of the large Methodist churches, said that he wondered, while he was there, what his rabbinical ancestors would think of him as a Jewish rabbi seated in the pulpit of a Methodist church, waiting his turn to speak a sincere word of farewell to a bishop. He felt, however, that times had so changed, synagogues and Christian churches had so changed, rabbis and bishops had so changed, that he could be perfectly at ease where he was.

This sense of a common purpose that was so marked in many of the addresses and discussions bids fair in the not too distant future to bring about something of a *rapprochement* between the religions of the world.

These words have been written in a sincere effort to evaluate the series of addresses and sense out their permanent values. Properly, this paper should close here, yet the picture would not be complete. I hesitate to write further, especially since I am one who has seen life through the simple windows of a settlement house and not through the stained-glass windows of the church.

Yet in all of this it seemed that one did catch glimpses or a hint, at least, of a spiritual renaissance.

Mr. Glenn Frank once said that the materials for a renaissance in civilization are lying about like lumber in a lumber yard awaiting the hand of a master builder. In these discussions one felt that in like manner there were the materials for a spiritual renaissance. Does this, too, await the hand of a master builder?

There is a sense in which master minds bring about a renaissance, a new civilization, or new epochs in the history of the world. But there is also a sense somewhat mystical, and depending upon the ripeness of time, when such a renaissance produces the men that will later be its glory. One caught glimpses of this in the discussions. Is this approach of a spiritual renaissance, yet even in embryo, the cause of the shift in our scientific thinking, of the words of a Professor Eddington, of the awakening interest of men in religion, of

the touching of hands across age-old divisions, of the stress upon the moral and social implications of religion, of the relegation of creeds and dogmas to a place of minor importance, and of the sensing out of a common purpose in it all?

Perhaps all these things are but the yeast at work in the hearts and minds of men that will bring about, in the future, a rebirth of religion. For myself, the great adventure in religion, this year, has been the discovery of these gossamer threads leading to a spiritual renaissance.

Religion from the Standpoint of Agnosticism

HARRY ELMER BARNES received his A.B. and A.M. degrees from Syracuse University, and his Ph.D. from Columbia University. He entered the field of education, and after teaching in various universities became the Professor of Historical Sociology at Smith College. He has been a lecturer at the principal universities in the country, and is a member of many commissions and boards relating to his subject. He is author of works relating to sociology and penology, and, of recent general interest, *The Genesis of the World War,* and *Living in the Twentieth Century.*

It will be remembered that Dr. Barnes delivered an address recently before the American Association for the Advancement of Science which created a great deal of comment throughout the country, and called forth an energetic reply from Cardinal Hayes of New York.

II. Religion from the Standpoint of Agnosticism

by Harry Elmer Barnes

THE conflict between science and religion is but one manifestation of the most important situation which faces us in contemporary world affairs. The most striking aspect of the modern age is the remarkable gulf which exists between the extensive range of progress in science, technology, and industry in the last century and the essentially static nature of our opinions and institutions, most of which date from the eighteenth century or earlier. From the standpoint of technology and material culture Thomas Jefferson is further removed from Woodrow Wilson and Herbert Hoover than from the men of the late Stone Age. On the other hand, from the standpoint of intellectual enlightenment, a civilized and urbane outlook upon life, and social tolerance, Jefferson would be regarded by most unprejudiced persons as a much more truly cultivated man than Wilson or Hoover. One cannot possibly imagine Thomas Jefferson imprisoning men for expressing their honest convictions, angling for the votes of religious fanatics, or countenancing a Prohibition Act.

Not only is there a marked discrepancy between our material culture and our opinions and institutions, but there is also to be discerned a notable difference of attitude toward antiques in our material equipment and antiques in our mental make-up. There are plenty of persons who would be unspeakably humiliated to own a car of last year's model but at the same time take inordinate pride in the display of ideas, the origins of which antedate any type of wheeled vehicle. Of all forms of influences retarding intellectual and institutional growth and perpetuating this gap between material culture and social opinion, there can be no doubt whatever that organized orthodox religion is, beyond all comparison, the most powerful and sinister. It is the thing which most effectively retards that free play of human intelligence which is absolutely essential for social invention and experimentation. It is the chief source of that dogmatic intolerance which strengthens conservatism and delays social progress. Bertrand Russell has well called attention to the harm that "good men" do through their ignorance of the fundamental facts of human existence and social life. We shall here summarize only a few of the outstanding contemporary evils which we may assign to the influence of orthodox religion.

The scientist looks upon the great volume of

fears and superstitions which obviously have not the slightest scientific validity, but, nevertheless, continue to terrorize countless millions. He notes the expense connected with the great organizations devoted to exploiting these superstitions and imaginary fears, and reflects upon what might be done with such resources of money and potential intelligence in advancing the secular welfare of mankind. He considers the unhealthy and unhappy mental states which afflict millions in America today because of false theories of life inculcated in earlier ages when man was solely concerned with salvation and when he had no command of the scientific and æsthetic knowledge essential to the understanding of what constitutes a healthy and happy life here on earth. He surveys the suffering due to the widespread contraction of mental and nervous diseases which are a product of this same unscientific conception of desirable human behavior. He observes the wide prevalence of serious physical diseases that are today extant solely because of that prudery born of religion which prevents us from undertaking adequate education in regard to venereal prophylaxis. He contemplates the unspeakable suffering and the many unnecessary deaths resulting from our barbaric laws regarding abortion.

He discovers families in dire poverty and the world approaching the saturation point in popu-

lation growth which may well turn humanity back into barbarism as a result of the necessity for a struggle for bare existence—all on account of an archaic religious prejudice against birth-control and population limitation. He observes many unscrupulous employers exploiting supernatural religion as a socio-economic anæsthetic, thus enabling them to escape their decent obligation of adequate wages and satisfactory working-hours. By aiding the priesthood in their effort to perpetuate superstition and other-worldliness, they are reasonably successful in inducing the laborers to accept their harsh and miserable lives here on earth in the hope of better things in heaven.

The candid observer of present conditions must further note our barbarous divorce laws, which degrade the institution of marriage and rob hundreds of thousands of families of freedom, sentiment, independence, and self-respect. They make it necessary to deal with the family as a theological entity rather than as a social institution and thereby obstruct any sane handling of the pressing and baffling problem of saving the best in family life. Likewise, the secular commentator cannot ignore a fanatical and ill-conceived prohibition scheme parading under the guise of a "noble experiment," but actually debauching American morals and political loyalty, stimulat-

ing crime and paralyzing our system of criminal justice—with results as fatal to real temperance as to the promotion of civilized modes of utilizing alcohol in promoting happiness.

If he possesses, in addition to scientific knowledge and acumen, some degree of æsthetic appreciation, the scientist must also deplore the ugliness, brutality, and wastes which are an inevitable by-product of the superstitions, prejudices, and solemnity of orthodox religion.

Once he observes these matters in a thorough fashion, he is not likely to continue to believe that the scientists can persist in ignoring religion. If he is thoroughly conversant with contemporary conditions and issues, the scientist will also contend that supernatural religion must be further criticized on the ground that it absorbs the intellectual efforts of many able men whose talents we sorely need for the all-important task of coping with the increasingly complex problems of our material culture and our social institutions.

We now face an epoch of religious reconstruction the like of which the world has never before contemplated or experienced. Some writers have been pleased to compare the present age with the religious revolution of the later Roman Empire, but any such comparison is most superficial and misleading. What happened in the later Roman Empire was the dissolution of the older state re-

ligions and the older supernatural religious philosophies, and their replacement by what were in some cases even more crudely supernatural cults, the process being accompanied by "a failure of nerve" and a growth of credulity and ignorance. Today we have all forms of supernaturalism challenged by an ever greater body of irrefutable scientific facts, and our age is one characterized by the development of a growing secular and critical orientation upon the part of the intellectual leaders. Fundamentalism, Catholic and Protestant, has burned its bridges behind it, and it is only a matter of time until it must decay and disintegrate.

It both begs the question and befogs the issue to say that there is no conflict between science and religion merely because certain advanced modernist cults have adopted a secular, tolerant, and urbane position in regard to human affairs. For every civilized and enlightened clergyman who has surrendered orthodoxy and adopted a secular outlook there are still scores of intolerant dervishes throughout the land busily engaged in promoting a brand of inquisitorial and invidious supernaturalism akin to that which prevailed in the centuries of the religious wars, the Inquisition, and the witchcraft delusion. In a group of seven hundred relatively enlightened ministers in Chicago and environs recently studied by Dr. Betts, 61 per cent held that men would be literally pun-

ished in hell for rejecting the deity of Christ; 53 per cent believed in a concrete, material hell with a specific astral location; and 60 per cent believed in a personal, corporeal devil.

We are, of course, aware that many illustrious natural scientists have of late declared that there is no conflict between science and religion, and we are conscious that internationally famous mathematicians, physicists, and chemists conduct orthodox Sunday-school classes, but this is of no relevance to the basic question at issue. The listing of a large number of pious scientists means nothing until we have examined the nature of both their religious and their scientific ideas, and in the end it may show nothing more than the remarkable capacity of the human mind for compartmentalization. Many an eminent scientist at seventy may entertain the same religious views that he assimilated at the knee of his Methodist mother at the age of eight or under. Further, many of the scientific reconcilers arbitrarily define science and religion in such a fashion as to make conflict by very definition impossible, but in doing so they divorce their conception of religion from what prevails in practice among 90 per cent of all active believers. This only evades and in no sense solves the problem. Other scientists, like Dr. Pupin, rigorously exacting in the

laboratory, often become the easy victims of naïve, wishful thinking in the religious field.

We may now summarize briefly the essentials of orthodox Judaism and Christianity as handed down through the centuries and still supported and credited by an overwhelming majority of those actively associated with the Jewish and Christian religions. We shall then indicate how this religious complex fares when confronted by the well-established facts of contemporary natural, psychological, and social science.

The basic assumption of orthodox religion is that of the all-important nature of the supernatural world, which is held to be the ultimate source of the forces and principles which manifest themselves in the world of material nature. This supernatural world is presided over by a hierarchy of spiritual figures divided into two classes, good and evil. Both groups are presided over by a supreme spirit. The chief of the good spirits among the Jews and Christians is held to be Yahweh of the Old Testament, while the supreme evil spirit is the devil, once the black sheep in the divine household. The orthodox cosmology is highly compatible with these assumptions. It is held that, in the great creative week between October 23 and October 28, 4004 B.C., Yahweh created the universe and all therein. Our earth, conceived of as a small bit of land around the eastern end

of the Mediterranean Sea, was by all odds the largest and most important element in this universe. God placed over this minute earth a solid blue bowl known as the firmament, the inside of which was studded with the heavenly luminaries placed there for the edification and use of men. The heavens were at best but a few miles from the earth, and God and his kindred spirits were perfectly free to pass to and fro between the earth and the dome of the heavens. Man, designed in such a fashion as closely to resemble Yahweh, was looked upon as incomparably the most important entity in the material universe.

As an explanation and justification of the universe and human existence the Jews and Christians came into contact with the Persian cosmic philosophy and derived therefrom the only general rationale of the universe which has ever received any widespread acceptance in Western civilization. According to this version God created the material universe in order that a specific and material arena might be provided for the struggle between the principles of good and evil. Those who aided God and the principle of good would be rewarded by an immortal and extremely pleasant life in the world to come, while those who willfully supported the devil and the principle of evil would be destroyed in a lake of fire and brimstone.

This Persian folklore was adopted by the later

Jews and Christians and became the basis of that other-worldliness so characteristic of the orthodox Christian mind. The good life consisted in aiding God and the principle of good, thereby attaining salvation in the world to come. The source of guidance for the good life was to be discovered in Holy Scripture, directly revealed by God to man, and in the comment of the theologians upon scriptural truths. Conduct was evaluated in relation to these other-worldly and supernatural criteria and objectives of life. Sinful conduct was not judged by the effect of behavior upon human existence and happiness, but rather with respect to its relation to the supposed commands of God.

It scarcely needs to be pointed out that even those rudimentary aspects of modern science which lie beyond the reach of rational criticism completely explode this whole theory of the universe, God, man, and the good life. Modern science entirely rejects any such theory as that of a supernatural world divorced from the material universe. The scientist does not contend that he has solved all the riddles of the cosmos, but he does contend that there is no convincing evidence whatever thus far adduced to support the theory of supernatural causation. Nothing is more indefensible than the typical religious thesis that religion can step in where science is baffled and provide adequate cosmic orientation and reliable

guidance for human conduct. At best, religion can only assume to interpret and evaluate the facts discovered by science. Therefore, in every place where science proves baffled or inadequate, religion is likewise impotent. In the light of modern knowledge and the contemporary outlook, unsolved or insolvable matters are essentially irrelevant for religion pending their solution. As far as man is justified in searching for causes, he must carry on this quest on the assumption of naturalistic causation as revealed in the methods and principles of natural, psychological, and social science. If he cannot discover his solutions in such fields and by such methods, he must recognize the complete futility of expecting any answer whatever to his queries for the time being.

With the repudiation of the conception of a supernatural world and its logical deduction of supernatural power we quite naturally and inevitably dispose of the ancient conception of a spirit world. The whole orthodox hierarchy of spirits; Yahweh, the archangels, and the angels; the devil, his supreme council of hell, the non-commissioned officers among the diabolical forces, and all the swarm of petty imps given over to the torture of the damned—are wiped out at one gesture by the introduction of the scientific and historical point of view and by its applications to the analysis of the orthodox complex of belief. Yah-

weh appears as nothing more than a petty tribal deity similar to hundreds of others existing in western Asia at the time of his adoption by the Hebrew peoples, traditionally as the result of Moses' marriage with the daughter of Jethro the Kenite. The orthodox assume that the Jews and Christians owe their preëminence to the fact that they have enjoyed the favor and special care of Yahweh, but it is obvious to all informed persons that the reverse of this is actually true. Yahweh owes his historic reputation and persistence to the fact that he was lucky enough to be adopted by the highly capable Jewish people, to share in their dramatic career of historical development, and to be taken up by the Christians. The new conception of a cosmic God may or may not be a myth, but certainly the orthodox Jewish and Christian conception of Yahweh is perhaps the greatest and most influential myth which history records.

It hardly needs to be emphasized that the rejection of the validity of the orthodox conception of Yahweh involves a complete reconstruction of the place of Jesus in modern religion. No amount of modernist rationalization can obscure the disconcerting fact that Jesus actually owes his historic position to the assumption that he was literally the only begotten son of Yahweh, fulfilling the messianic hope of the Jews but rejected by

them, and his followers thus freed to found a new religion. No such conception as that of a "cosmic God" prevailed in the early days of Christianity, nor can the Jesus concept be harmonized in any way with the new notions of a cosmic God, First Cause, Absolute Essence, Universal Love, or anything of the kind. With the discrediting of the orthodox view of Yahweh the conventional notion of Jesus must, then, pass away. If he be regarded solely as a secular religious teacher, there is too little information—much of this uncertain and contradictory—to make his teachings of any great significance for our age, and if any doctrines could be assigned to him with certainty they would scarcely possess precise relevance for our day. The most that can be said of Jesus, and this with no certainty, is that he appears to have been an apostle, by no means unique, of kindliness and sympathy. He could be most appropriately commemorated in our age, as Heywood Broun has suggested, by establishing a "Be-kind Day" as a national holiday. Just how to apply kindliness to specific situations in our day is something which social and medical scientists would have to indicate in detail.

As to whether or not we can construct a new cosmic God in terms of the facts of modern science we need take no dogmatic position at this time. This much must be pointed out, however,

namely, that in any such attempt we are presuming to seek for a cosmic deity in terms of knowledge, categories, and methods of a strictly limited human sort, which may have no cosmic validity whatever. In seeking for a First Cause we must recognize that both the conception "first" and the conception "cause" are purely human inventions which may have no validity whatever in relation to the God question. Our modern physicists have already rendered a heavy blow to the older theories of causation. Still further, if we are to discover a cosmic God, we must do so in the light of our present-day knowledge concerning the extent of the cosmos and the intricacy of physical matter. In both of these respects, however, the knowledge already at our disposal is completely beyond the power of the human mind intelligently to assimilate and to interpret it. The human mind is completely incapable of intelligently discerning the significance and nature of distances such as a million light-years, of a mass equal to that of Betelguese or Antares, or of the intricacy of the atom, with its electrons coursing about on their orbits at a speed equal to that of light and generating the fundamental fact or unit of energy as they leap from one orbit to another.

If the elements of human logic apply to the search for a new cosmic God, it would seem that

the quest is essentially futile as far as the hope of obtaining precise results is concerned. One cannot draw sensible and valid deductions from materials which transcend his powers of intelligent assimilation and interpretation. It would appear that the most which we may hope to achieve in the search for a new cosmic God is a sense of vague, if impressive, cosmic reverence and terrestrial humility.

There is a somewhat popular contention that we should not try to search for God in our new knowledge of the physical universe, but should rather "look within ourselves" and find God there. This vestige of the old fundamentalism is entirely incompatible with modern biology and psychology. Even the best trained psychologist, "looking within himself," would only be able to learn something of the nature and behavior of a recently derived mammal inhabiting a very petty planet. Likewise, the suggestion that we can discern the nature of God in the personality of Jesus can in no way be harmonized with modern scholarship and scientific knowledge.

It has already been implied that the orthodox theory of the cosmos has completely disintegrated in the light of our present knowledge. In the place of a little blue bowl turned over a few thousand square miles at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, we have already had revealed

to our astonished and quite incomplete inspection a physical universe of universes, the bounds and content of which completely defy intelligent appreciation by the human mind. Even our cosmos, namely, that which we have been able to discern with astronomical instruments, is estimated by competent astronomers to be 1,500,000,000 light-years (*i.e.*, 1,500,000,000 x 6,000,000,000,000 miles) in diameter, and contains at least ten billion stars. According to Shapley, it turns about a center at a distance of at least fifty thousand light-years from the earth, making one revolution in approximately three hundred million years. Some of these heavenly bodies are large enough so that twenty-five million suns as large as ours could be contained therein. In such a cosmos as this, which may be but one in a cosmos of cosmoses, our petty earth recedes into a position of indescribable astral insignificance. Indeed, there is no understandable human method of clearly and accurately portraying and emphasizing the utterly infinitesimal nature of our earth in the new cosmic perspective. It goes without saying that the importance of man, cosmically speaking, recedes in direct proportion to the shrinking of the earth in the new astral outlook. This does not mean, of course, that man has become less significant for mankind. The opposite is, rather, the case. With the progressive recession of any probability of solving the

riddle of the universe, the nature and destiny of man becomes the sole problem of immediate import for the human race. In short, man's cosmic unimportance has established the fact of his unlimited mundane significance.

Historical scholarship and critical philosophy have done for the old orthodox explanation of the universe and human destiny what natural science has achieved with respect to the discrediting of the old cosmology. Once we realize that the doctrine of creation for the purpose of permitting the combat of good and evil was but an element in the ancient superstitions and mythology of the Persians and other oriental peoples, and that the doctrine of eternal salvation and damnation was derived from these same primitive sources, we recognize at once that such views as these cannot command the slightest respect from intelligent and educated persons. There is no more reason for believing in the orthodox doctrines of heaven and hell than there is for taking seriously any other aspect of the archaic mythology of the Persians. Likewise, modern physiological chemistry and psychology have completely uprooted any basis whatever for the doctrine of the metaphysical soul or for any belief in a literal bodily or psychological immortality.

If one were to be asked what explanation man can substitute for this discarded interpretation

of the purpose of the universe and human existence, he would be forced, if honest and candid, to answer that no credible substitute has been discovered or is likely to be discovered. Like the question of the cosmic God, the explanation of the universe is likely to remain a problem unsolved by mankind. It involves issues and implications which quite surpass the capabilities of the human mind. Indeed, the very assumption that there is any such thing as cosmic purpose or explanation is obviously a purely human conception and a mundane invention, the validity of which cannot today be proved or discredited.

With this rejection of the ancient orthodox conception of the purpose of God and man and the recognition of the impossibility of discovering any logical and convincing substitute, we have come to understand that the chief problem of human existence is to devise ever more adequate means of making life more happy, adequate, efficient, and beautiful here upon earth. We can have no expectation of immortal existence beyond that which may be obtained through the transmission of the germ-plasm to our descendants and through the reputation which may attach to our earthly achievement in the estimate of succeeding generations.

Modern physiology and psychology have completely disposed of the old conception of a soul.

The human personality is now perceived to be the resultant of the interaction between our biochemical equipment—the human body—on the one hand, and our social environment on the other. Death puts an end to every aspect of the personality—the neurological basis of mental life, our habit-responses and the social self which we have built up in contact with the social environment. Granted these basic facts, any such thing as the literal projection of the human personality after death becomes obviously quite unthinkable. We may postulate the continuance or transformation of energy, but certainly not the perpetuation of personality.

The good life can, therefore, no longer be regarded as that type of existence designed to promote salvation in the world to come, but rather must be viewed as that type of conduct which will lead to the most complete and perfect satisfaction of human desires here on earth. The whole perspective of man, then, is transformed from a supernatural and other-worldly psychosis into a purely secular proposition and a wholly worldly enterprise.

If it is not the purpose of life to achieve salvation, it goes without saying that we can no longer seek valid guidance in those scriptural and theological sources of information designed to lead us to salvation in the world to come. We must, in-

stead, secure our directions from that body of information which can reveal to us the nature of the best life for man here on earth and can inform us as to how to attain approximately more perfectly to this desirable state of mundane existence. Once this secular point of view is intelligently and logically adopted and appreciated, it is evident that we must seek guidance for the good life today from the biological, psychological, and social sciences, and from æsthetics. These and these alone contain cogent information for the control of human life here on earth. It appears, then, at once that the theologian, in the old sense, has no rôle whatever in furnishing information as to the nature of the perfect life in the modern perspective.

With the passing of the supernatural complex we are compelled to abandon the old animistic view of sin as an affront to God's majesty and as a violation of his express will. We can no longer estimate acts with relation to the supernatural world. In an age when we cannot even be sure of God's existence we obviously cannot ascertain his exact will. Human acts must be judged exclusively with reference to their earthly results, and undesirable conduct must be rechristened with secular terms such as crime, immorality, vulgarity, and the like. Sin is as much an anachronism today as witchcraft, even though crime may

possibly be on the increase. Likewise, we must abandon the use of the term "spiritual" because it is contaminated by thousands of years of association with animism and supernaturalism. The modern religious thinker should use the terms psychological and æsthetic when referring to what is conventionally described as spiritual, namely, psychic factors or the so-called "higher life," respectively. It may well be that we should pay more attention than we do to the higher life, but it should be described in intelligible secular terms and not associated with the ancient illusion of an area of non-material existence or interests.

It need not be maintained, however, that religion has no function in the modern world. Certainly orthodoxy is completely outlawed by even the rudiments of modern knowledge. On the other hand, it would appear that a rational secular religion may render an indispensable service in the way of assisting social control in harmony with the tenets of a mundane conception of the good life here on earth. It would seem that the most reasonable field for the functioning of religion in contemporary society is in the way of providing for the mass organization of the group sentiment of mankind in support of the larger principles of kindliness, sympathy, right, justice, honesty, and decency. Just what constitute the essentials of right and justice would have to be

determined by the appropriate scientific and æsthetic experts, but these experts have little potency in the way of arousing ardent popular support for their findings.

Religion has thus far been the most powerful agency in arousing and directing the collective will of mankind. Therefore, we may probably contend with safety that the function of a liberalized religion, divested of its archaic supernaturalism, would be to serve as the public propaganda adjunct of social science and æsthetics. The social sciences and æsthetics would supply specific guidance as to what ought to be done, while religion would produce the motive power essential to the translation of abstract theory into practical action. There would, however, be ever present the problem of restraining this educational propaganda and keeping it in thorough conformity with the recommendations of science and art. The function of the church, then, would be to organize the mass mind and mass activities in such a fashion as to benefit secular society and not to please God, at least not as God has been understood and expounded in the orthodox religions of the past.

It has often been held that the desire to please God is the only possible dynamic basis of a sound body of ethical doctrine and practice. Yet, in the new cosmic perspective, the notion of man's

designedly acting so as to attract the favorable notice of God can be regarded as nothing more than an amusing vestige of primitive animism. It would seem that a far more practicable and certain basis for kindliness, decency, and justice can be discovered in the sense of promoting happiness and well-being here on earth. Certainly, to the present writer, observing an unhappy mortal is a far greater stimulus to a kind act than the contemplation of the possibility of a First Cause. If, however, anyone remains irrevocably committed to the desire to please God, it may be held that the most logical method of so doing would be to promote, as far as possible, the best life here on earth. Unless one desires to charge God with illogicality and malice, it must be assumed that to encourage the best possible life for man here on earth is the type of achievement most likely to be pleasing to God.

The problem is not so much one of the nobility or the validity of this function of religion or one of its value to society; it is rather a question of whether or not the church can successfully carry out such a type of social service; whether an organization, hitherto almost exclusively devoted to the understanding, control, and exploitation of the supernatural world, can be completely transformed into an organization for the purpose of increasing the secular happiness of mankind here

on earth. Such a transformation would imply a complete revolution in the premises and activities of religion, and we have little or no evidence from the past to give us any definite assurance that so profound a transition is practicable or attainable. It remains to be seen whether organized religion can be held together and can operate without a sense of mystery and a fear of the unknown. The thrill from the mysterious has been the core of all past religions, and we have nothing to give any final assurance that religion can persist without this dominating element of mystery and fear.

It is not a question of the adequacy or splendor of the conception of a secular social religion, but rather one of the possibility of ingrafting this noble twig upon the tree of the ancient savage supernaturalism. Will man flock to the support of a humanitarian cult dominated by considerations of love, justice, and beauty with the same enthusiasm he has brought to the support of cults which have exploited his fears, hatreds, and jealousies? That is the real challenge in the future of religion, and no person, lay or clerical, can legitimately presume to give a definitive answer today. Tolerant and appreciative coöperation should exist between all sensible scientists and all clergymen who are endeavoring to promote secularism, enlightenment, and human happiness. The scientist must provide the specific factual element

in the new morals and ideals, but the church may be even more effective in putting them into practical application.

We must insist that modern religion should not only make the above concessions in doctrine in the face of modern scientific knowledge, but should also concede equal modifications in the practices supported by the older orthodox cults. Theological and philosophical modernism avails nothing unless it furnishes the basis for sociological modernism. The reconstruction of religion will mean nothing of importance unless it involves a thoroughgoing revolution in the codes of conduct which have been based upon supernatural considerations. This also implies the adoption of an urbane, tolerant, tentative, and experimental attitude toward human society and institutions in the place of the characteristic absolutism, rigidity, and intolerance of the orthodox attitude toward human life.

It follows as a matter of course that such epoch-making changes as we have described above, with relation to the status of orthodox religion in the light of modern science and critical thought, make necessary a searching reëxamination of the place and function of the church in modern society. In the first place, the new view makes it very evident that the clergyman can no longer pretend to be a competent expert in the way of discovering the

nature, will, and operations of the new cosmic God. If undertaken and solved at all, this is a problem for the natural scientist and the cosmic philosopher of the Dewey vintage coöperating in the task. At best the theologian can only be a competent second- or third-hand interpreter of the facts and implications gathered about the cosmos and its laws by specialists in science and philosophy.

In the old days, when it was believed that God might be reached and understood through prayer, sacrifice, or incantation, the clergyman or theologian was indeed "the man of God" who could make clear the will of the Deity to believers. But now, when God must be sought, if at all, by means of the test-tube, the compound microscope, the interferometer, the radium tube, Einstein's equations and cosmic philosophy, the conventional clergyman is rather hopelessly out of place in the premises. Therefore, it is apparent that the intelligent and educated theologians must surrender their age-long pretension to special, if not unique, competence in clearing up the problem of the nature of God and his laws. They can at best be little more than ring-side spectators of the observatory and the laboratory, doing their best in the way of an amateurish appreciation of what is going on therein.

Next to the revelation of the nature of God and

his ways, the most time-honored function of the so-called "man of God" has been to unravel God's will with respect to human conduct and to inculcate the absolute and inflexible principles which should control personal morality, in order that the soul of the individual might be assured of an ultimate refuge in the New Jerusalem. This was a perfectly rational and logical function for religion when it was commonly assumed to be axiomatic (1) that the purpose of moral conduct was to insure the salvation of the soul, and (2) that the supreme and complete guide to moral living was to be discovered in Holy Scriptures. Neither of these fundamental postulates can be sustained today. There seems to be no ground whatever for the orthodox views of a spiritual immortality and the imminence of a literal heaven and hell. Hence, the basic objective of right living can no longer be regarded as the insurance of spiritual salvation.

The fundamental purpose of the good life, however, is to secure the maximum amount of happiness for the greatest possible number here upon this earth. Therefore, it is readily apparent that accurate guidance to the good life cannot be sought in ancient Scriptures or provided by specialists in Holy Writ. The moral code of the future must be supplied by the specialists in mundane happiness, namely, biologists, physi-

ologists, psychiatrists, educators, social scientists, and students and practitioners of æsthetics. Some who frankly admit the incompetence of the clergyman and the theologian in the way of providing original and conclusive guidance to a moral conduct contend, nevertheless, that the church can exercise a very valuable service in interpreting and popularizing the findings of the specialists in human happiness. This may be true, to a certain extent, but many qualifications would have to be added. Many phases of guidance to complete human happiness would necessarily be a highly technical and individual matter, be handled by medical and other experts in relation to individual cases and problems, and would scarcely be adapted to comprehensive general interpretation.

A much better case can be made for the service which may be rendered by religion in inculcating an interest in, and respect for, such large and scarcely debatable moral conceptions as justice, honesty, pacifism, coöperation, etc.

There is, however, an important practical consideration, namely, that the modern social and economic order is based to no inconsiderable degree upon intrigue, shrewd business enterprise, relentless competition, unreasoning patriotism, and class selfishness. It can scarcely be expected that the custodians of the modern order,

who provide the chief pecuniary support for our religious institutions and organizations, will contribute with enthusiasm to a movement designed to cut at the root of many of the principles and practices which they hold most sacred and indispensable. Before the church could achieve much in this field it would be necessary to organize and carry on a very definite propaganda of education in the principles of social ethics broadly conceived. Thus far, few clergymen so orientated and motivated have been able to maintain their position long enough to make much headway in this educating process. As far as the writer is aware, there has been no marked or organized effort to draft the services of Sherwood Eddy, Norman Thomas, Kirby Page, Bouck White, Harry F. Ward, Ralph Harlow, and others of their kind and induct them into the pastorate of great metropolitan churches.

The supervision of the church over recreation, which has in the past been exercised chiefly in the way of an arbitrary decision as to what are immoral and what are moral forms of recreation, and in closely scrutinizing and controlling the activities of individuals in these fields, must now be sharply challenged. The orthodox religious criteria as to moral and immoral forms of recreation were not based upon physiological, psychological, or social grounds, but upon theological considerations which have little or no validity in

the light of modern knowledge. The church, having no competence in the matter of actually determining the nature of moral and immoral conduct in the light of modern secularism, obviously cannot apply its decisions in this field to the realm of recreation. Recreation, like morality, with which it has been so closely associated in the past, is a field for the secular expert and must be handed over to biologists, medical experts, psychologists, and social scientists. The church, at most, could scarcely go further than to proclaim the general desirability of healthy and adequate exercise and the exhibition of a proper spirit of good sportsmanship.

Another function of the church in the past which has received much support relates to its æsthetic services. It is held that the ritual, pageantry and liturgy of the church provide a relatively economical and highly valuable æsthetic service to humanity. This is, of course, an argument which can be far better justified from the Catholic standpoint than from the Protestant, the Protestant churches having given up most of the splendor of the Catholic service. This argument boils down to the allegation that the church is in a position to "put on a better show" for the populace and at a lower cost than any comparable secular organization. While there is much to be said in support of this view in regard to the

services of the church in earlier periods, it would seem that this function may be, and indeed is, now achieved more adequately and cheaply by various secular enterprises, such as the grand opera, the theater, the movies, and various types of public pageantry. Further, many contend that the attitude of fear and awe generated by religious ritual and pageantry produces a fundamentally unhealthy state of mind which, to a large degree, offsets the æsthetic functions exercised thereby.

The doctrine that the church should control and direct education is defensible only in the light of the archaic conception that theology is the queen of the sciences and that the chief purpose of education is to advance the cause of salvation from sin. Ecclesiastically directed education is so much of an anachronism in our modern secular age that even fundamentalist Protestants have abandoned the support of religiously controlled education. The dominance of the church over education is today supported in any general way only by the Catholic church.

Therefore, it would seem pretty definitely established that the conventional functions of the church have well-nigh completely evaporated in the light of contemporary knowledge and intellectual attitudes. It must be conceded that the theologian is no longer needed to chart out and ontrol the supernatural world and supernatural

powers, inasmuch as the existence of such entities can scarcely be established. It is equally apparent that the theologian cannot by himself locate, describe, or interpret the new cosmic God, believed by some to be implied in the discoveries of modern science. Neither can the theologian supply detailed moral guidance in the way of indicating how man must live in order to achieve the maximum degree of happiness here on earth. Nor can the church support its ancient pretensions to guiding and controlling recreation or in supplying popular pageantry.

The writer is inclined to believe that the future and permanent function of the church will be that of providing mass organization of the group sentiment of mankind in support of the broader virtues of life as pointed out above. There are some, however, who declare that the secular lecture platform is more suitable to, and adequate for, this function and that the public forum must ultimately supplant the ecclesiastical edifice as the center of intelligent propaganda and the development of collective sentiment for social improvement.

Still further, the church must compete with the various secular interests which have invaded the once holy and sanctified Lord's Day. There is no doubt that the falling off in church attendance today has been far more the result of the

development and popularity of the automobile, golf, and organized sports, than of the learned writings of radical biblical scholars or the arguments of aggressive freethinkers. The popularity of secularism and of secular interests and pursuits has come about largely unconsciously, as a result of the inevitable competition of the secular aspects of our modern material civilization with sanctimonious tradition, sacred interests, and ecclesiastical organization. The probability is that this secular competition with the sacred realm will increase rather than diminish. Again, the church in modern urban civilization is no longer the vital center of community life that it was in the old agricultural civilization. Finally, the church is bound to bear the serious direct competition of modern technology. Most important here is the radio. Even with those who remain interested in religion there will be a growing tendency to prefer to remain at home and listen to a great preacher broadcasting his sermon over the radio instead of going to the local church and listening to a sermon of indifferent quality by an inferior minister of the gospel. Not only would such a person be listening to a superior brand of thought and oratory; he could also absorb this material in more comfortable fashion, seated in an easy chair, dressed in a smoking-jacket, and enjoying, perchance, a good cigar.

Religion from the Standpoint of Science

Heber Doust Curtis studied at the University of Michigan and the University of Virginia. He was a member of the staff of Lick Observatory, Mt. Hamilton, California, from 1902 until 1920, at which time he was called to the directorship of the Allegheny Observatory and work at the University of Pittsburgh. He spent four years in South America in charge of the branch station of the Lick Observatory located at Santiago, Chile. He has observed eclipses in the United States and in Sumatra, Labrador, Mexico, and Russia. His work in recent years has been mainly connected with celestial photography, with particular reference to the nebulæ and to the size of the universe. The paper of Dr. Curtis was received fro. Gibraltar as he was en route to Sumatra to observe the eclipse of the sun, May, 1929.

III. Religion from the Standpoint of Science

by Heber Doust Curtis

IN A precise sense, there are admittedly aspects which are meaningless in the title of this address. We do not admit that the fields of religion and science are innately mutually exclusive, yet we cannot claim any close connection between them. We cannot yet, and perhaps it will never be possible to, regard as valid similar captions which might read, "The Fifth Symphony from the Standpoint of Science," or "The Gettysburg Speech from the Standpoint of Science." Science might analyze the sounds involved; the psychologist might foolishly try to explain the cause of the resulting mental reactions, but there would be left a spiritual kernel, the element of mind, untouched by the cold analysis; something not necessarily excluded by science, but so remote, so different, as to be outside its field. All science can do with this other something which makes us men and gives us a soul is either to deny it *in toto* or to admit its existence. There have been and still are those who prefer to deny, or to

call the soul by other, longer, and equally meaningless names.

The tremendous importance of such a book as Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World* does not lie at all in the theory of relativity which he supports there, and which you may or may not believe, as you choose. It is a milestone of progress in that it seems to mark the passing of that older phase of materialistic science; in that it not only admits, but demands, other elements in the universe than mere matter and brute force.

In this address we shall admit, once for all, that there are vital aspects of difference which give the title, "Religion from the Standpoint of Science," but little more valid meaning than a title reading, "The Lateran Concordat from the Standpoint of Science." We shall assume and admit that there are in most men religious soul-pastures as real, as vital, as scientifically inexplicable as the feelings aroused by a song, a poem, a hero's sacrifice, a truth. But, so far from classifying religion as merely an emotion, as we might conceivably do with the song, the poem, the sacrifice, the truth, we shall try to see whether religion and science have permissible points of contact, and whether religion is in any way excluded from the adherence of the scientific, reasoning mind.

If inaccurate definition be the parent of discord and intolerance, the most superficial en-

deavor to avoid such a pitfall will make it clear that our definitions of science have changed far more in the past fifty years than has the definition of religion. For, whatever may be our definition of religion, and whatever may be the gap between, say, modernism and fundamentalism, in the absolute sense the fundamental element of religion has remained essentially the same. But, great as has been the change of the content of science in this interval, and stupendous as have been the additions made to this content, the changes in the fundamentals of scientific thought have been even greater.

For there was a comfortable feeling of certainty in the science of my boyhood days; it was as settled and finished as trigonometry. Its findings seemed, to scientists at least, as certain as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. This older science was strict, infallible, unyielding, orthodox. It felt that all who questioned its data were fools (as a matter of fact, most of them were!) Against the bigotry of the *odium theologicum* it opposed an almost equally bigoted *odium scientificum*. All this appears to have passed, and the characteristic of modern science is not infallibility, but change, growth, progress; it is living, rather than completed; a vigorous youth rather than an authoritative elder; it regards a theory as a policy, rather than as a creed.

Furthermore, this older science of half a century back was very largely dominated by the principle of pure materialism on the biological side and determinism on the side of inorganic law. The atom was a certainty, the realm of fixed law. We had also made very considerable progress in the laboratory construction of each and every material component of plant and animal life, and had found how very closely the mechanics of one side of that function called life are bound up with known chemical and physical forces. Small wonder that in the excitement of this new-found knowledge there were many scientists who felt that the absolute duplication of every function of life, of life itself, was only a matter of further study and experiment; small wonder, too, that all this gave a very powerful impetus to a philosophy of pure materialism, which has only recently begun to lose its former influence. The process of discovery has continued; it is now theoretically, though not commercially, possible to make rubber in the laboratory, and the exceedingly difficult feat of making ordinary cane sugar from its basal elements has just been accomplished. By giving it proper chemicals for food, a piece of tissue from the heart of a chicken is still living in a glass jar after eight years; the surplus growth is cut away from time to time, for if this were not done and the tissue could be fed and grow continuously,

it would now be larger than the entire solar system! But the actual complexity of the living cell seems infinite, and with our continued triumphs over the mere matter of life, there is today a very decided trend away from the old pure materialism. As we know more, we find that we also know less.

What is it which has operated to change the fixed determinism of the older science, and to add the formerly unknown element of humility to the vocabulary of present-day science? Strangely and paradoxically enough, the change has come from just that field of science which formerly seemed governed by the most unchangeable law, atomic physics. With apologies to the sect named, it has been discovered within the past decade that the atom and the electron are not old-line predestinarian Presbyterians, but free-lances, subject only to the laws of probability.

These theories, in physics, are so new that their age is to be reckoned by months, rather than by years. Briefly, in many electrical and atomic phenomena, science can no longer lay down the infallible and inflexible formulæ of a few decades ago, but substitutes now a pure probability relation. "No longer do we say that if an electron finds itself in an electric field a certain consequence will definitely follow. We only say that there is a certain probability that such and such

will take place." In all the most modern atomic theories we find this same change from certainty to probability; no longer is an electron's future course of action predestined; while most of them will probably act in a certain way, a relatively few electrons may do most bizarre and "illegal" things. For the determinism and predestination of the older physics we now substitute what are, in effect, the laws of chance. While we thus at a stroke lose most of the *ex cathedra* character of formerly "exact" physical formula, this by no means indicates that we now have a haphazard world of matter, for, paradoxically, there is nothing much less haphazard than these same laws of chance, when aggregates of very large numbers of individuals are involved; witness the flourishing condition of most life insurance companies.

It is an interesting fact that we today cannot touch deeply upon the problems of any field of thought without using other branches of science in support, and to go thoroughly into the subject of religion from the standpoint of science, or *vice versa,* we shall need a preparatory discipline by considering briefly the subject of knowledge itself, which is generally regarded as peculiarly the field of the philosopher. While a philosopher may in general be defined as an individual who claims and arrogates to himself all the really interesting portions of other sciences, philosophy and science

do agree in that both teach us that we can have no absolute and perfect knowledge of anything. To the extent, then, that we must admit that there is nothing which we can "know" perfectly and completely, we are all partially agnostics.

Practically, as natural science has so recently been forced to do, we today apply the law of probability to all knowledge; if we can verify some one fact a thousand or ten thousand times, the probability that it will always respond in that same way becomes a practical, common-sense certainty, though not an absolute one. Joseph Butler said, "Probability is the very guide of life." This probable certainty is the basis of all science as well as of all belief, and is amply sufficient; moreover, we have no other norm. This lack of absolute finality applying to all knowledge is not only a fact, but seems a self-evident fact to all who reflect deeply, and in any discussion such as this we must never lose sight of this unavoidable uncertainty. To any who may criticize me for a religious statement lacking in the certainty and authority which he would prefer, I can only say that the theory of knowledge gives no preference in this respect to scientific or religious beliefs.

I am rated as a scientist. It would probably be possible to "prove" this point by my position, by certain work done, by membership in certain ex-

clusive scientific societies, and by similar hallmarks of the elect. I consider myself, furthermore, a deeply religious man. This is my own rating of myself. It would doubtless be very much more difficult to "prove" this, and it must rest upon my unsupported statement. In the fact that my classification as a scientist seems easy to substantiate, while my self-analysis as religious appears more difficult to prove, we perhaps may glimpse the difference in the beliefs involved.

In common with most scientific men, I have answered many a questionnaire, religious, and otherwise, whose tribe seems, fortunately, to be growing less. I have generally found it necessary to return such questionnaires with comments or objections interlined to qualify the bald answers requested, for, to be accurate, either a questionnaire or a definition should have an infinite flexibility. There may be an occasional reader who, if he could subject me to a searching questionnaire of his own setting, would grudgingly concede to me a certain modicum of religiosity; but would aver that I am bound for hell notwithstanding. We may dismiss such differences with Mark Twain's trenchant and ever-true phrase, "Orthodoxy is my doxy, and heterodoxy is your doxy." For religion is so large a term, so difficult to chain within any one precise definition. I hesitate to add my own definition to the many hundreds

extant, yet it is necessary for an appraisal of what I may bring forward later. It is a dual definition.

First, I cannot conceive a religion which lacks a belief in that concept called God. Secondly, it must contain, also, a reciprocal effort on the part of the believer to attune himself with the infinite. I regard the "concept called God" as axiomatic and self-defined, nor am I unwise enough to attempt to define it further. This definition, or definitions, may seem too broad to some, but we are discussing religion, not Christianity, Judaism, Mohammedanism, baptism, or predestination, and the consensus of modern opinion is to the effect that there are many gates to heaven, all wide open.

Every minutest physical detail of modern civilization is due to science. Science is, primarily, the body of things found out to date. Now merely finding things out is a rather futile process unless we give some meaning, connection, or synthesis to the thing found out; some relation to ourselves or to the rest of the cosmos. Science is finding it constantly more difficult to be concerned only with phenomena, but finds that it must more and more consider the ultimate reasons of phenomena, and there are many who feel that it cannot confine itself indefinitely solely to the lore of things seen and felt. Paraphrasing a certain famous dictum

of Mark Twain's, we may say that it is a good thing for a scientist to have a moderate amount of dreams and speculations; they keep him stirred up and prevent him from brooding over being merely a scientist. We may then define a scientist as one who is trying to discover more about this universe *and to arrange this knowledge in orderly fashion.* The second portion of this definition is far the more important, and gives me a perfect right, as a scientist, to speculate on "the concept called God" if I feel that I need him to make things "orderly."

When one assumes, following the beliefs of nearly all creeds, a God, and a universe under his control, it seems the height of absurdity to imagine that there can be any contradiction—that is, any so-called "conflict" between science and religion in their absolute and ideal senses; such a "conflict" is more than an absurdity, it is an impossibility. But it would be futile to deny that there has been, and still is, a real battle between science and man-made theology. It must be admitted that the progress in scientific knowledge has necessitated the abandonment or reinterpretation of many a theological dogma or credal tenet, and will doubtless cause further readjustments in the future. There are not a few sincere and able churchmen who are regarding with anxiety the effects of present and future knowledge on reli-

gious beliefs; we are finding a great deal of spiritual unrest and uncertainty in an age which is doubtless more deeply and sincerely religious (in the non-theological sense) than any other in history.

An analysis of this uncertainty would seem to indicate that the present action of the theory of evolution in causing such unrest is almost vanishingly small, and that our modernist-fundamentalist controversies are rather trivial and silly affairs which totally miss the real causes of present spiritual stock-taking. As far as evolution is concerned, it is today accepted by every scientist in the world, and by probably the very great majority of thinking churchmen; in fact, practically everywhere except in the legislatures of the states of Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas. We in other states do not yet have to bootleg the truth, but we may come to it eventually. There is still a tendency in certain ecclesiastical quarters to attempt to make great capital out of existing differences in scientific theories as to the precise *methods* employed in the course of evolution, but as to the validity of the *process* itself there is absolutely no difference among men of science. Evolution, plus God, so think many reverent scientists, leaves us with a more wonderful God, a more wonderful Bible, and a more wonderful future than that of those who hold to a flat earth

and helpmates who were originally ribs. The essential challenge to a religious attitude no longer rests in the evolutionary theory.

But it was Dean Inge, at the time of the Dayton evolution trial, who very keenly pointed out that the quarrel of the fundamentalists should not be with Darwin, but with Copernicus. For it is my own science, astronomy, that, while it enlarges our souls with its grandeur, still shakes those very souls with doubt as to what may eventually be left of some of our present concepts. I can show you photographs indicating so many suns that each soul which has lived on the earth since the beginning might work, each in his separate star, and draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are. Not merely this earth and we upon it, not merely our entire solar system, but even our entire Milky Way with its billions of suns, is relatively smaller in the great scheme of things than is a grain of sand when compared with the whole earth. Almost literally, we humans are merely a couple of billion microbes living on a speck of dust called the earth; conceivably we, our civilizations, our achievements, our aspirations and worships, may be but an incident in some vastly greater drama. Are we microbes important enough to have a personal God interested in our welfare, answering our pray-

ers, rewarding us for good and punishing us for evil?

And nearly as disquieting as this astronomical knowledge of our minuteness within the great plan, are certain movements in modern philosophy and the psychology of behaviorism which, if accepted at full value, would leave man with absolutely nothing which could not be ascribed directly to reflexes activated by his material environment—no consciousness, no conscience, no imagery, no will, no faith, no soul. These new trends are still on test, and are at present more widely accepted in America than they are abroad. Perhaps we must wait until the exuberance and exaggeration common to any new field of thought have died down, and yet it may well be that the attack has shifted and that the line of defense in future theological apologetics must lie in the psychological field, rather than in that of the biological sciences.

The apologist may well be excused, as he faces these newer and more difficult facts after having "weathered" in fairly satisfactory fashion the readjustments demanded by geological and biological science, if he occasionally longs for his easy, comfortable, anthropocentric, and geocentric cosmos of five hundred years ago! The earth was flat, and was the hub, the actual center, of the universe in every aspect. The sun was merely to

light us by day, and the stars to give us joy by night. That smaller cosmos engendered awe and wonder; it did not overwhelm us in our minuteness. Within that limited universe man was, without question, the only real, important, and vital thing; for that matter, it may easily be that he still holds this place; astronomy does not deny, but rather supports, our uniqueness. But at that time we were absolutely certain that it was all created for us, from center to circumference. We had no doubt whatever that we were the people, and wisdom died with us. We were wrong, then, in all of our science and in part of our religion, but we were very, very comfortable, and our course of best action was so straight and clear as to be really rather tiresome. We were at ease in our ignorance, while now increased knowledge brings a temporary uncertainty which is far more disquieting than the smug precision of our former ignorance. It would seem to be a certainty, however, that increased knowledge can never cause fear, and that there is not now and never will be any place for a philosophy of doubt, negation, and despair. While we have, it is true, lost some of the comfortable old props, we may expect the new knowledge to replace them with others, stronger and better. I feel confident, also, that eventually science will indicate for us more surely a sane and logical religious belief than even what

we somewhat loosely term faith. The question at issue is, can I prove this point? Probably not.

We must not expect too much. As to scientific validity, the theory of knowledge gives us no absolute norm by which we may estimate the comparative values of a belief in relativity or a belief in God. Both are beliefs. In either case we shall find keen intellects for and against, for into every belief there enter so many factors that science cannot fully coöperate. Many recently voted for Hoover, nearly as many for Smith, fewer for Thomas, yet each voter doubtless still feels that his particular choice was based upon correct scientific principles. In this series of addresses, seven men of more or less competence in their respective sciences have refused to stick to their lasts, but have gone far afield to discuss a tremendous theme which embraces all aspects of human aspiration, and no two of the seven have the same reaction to the problem. This does not mean that all seven are wrong; more probably all seven are right, or, at the most pessimistic rating, mostly right. In matters of judgment there is, unfortunately, no universal standard; we cannot put the thousands of unknowns which go to form an opinion into a scientific equation and solve it as we would solve an equation in algebra, for into every belief go a multitude of impressions, slants, facts, interpretations, hopes. Shall we then, like

Pilate, ask, hopelessly, "What is truth?" There is no need. While we realize that all our knowledge is partial, we still keep as the most interesting, valuable, and vital portion of our personality this very right to select, to weigh, to judge. Judging rightly, or judging wrongly, only as we exercise judgment do we really live.

Much I owe to the Land that grew,
More to the Lives that fed,
But most to Allah who gave me two
Separate sides to my head.

Much I reflect on the Good and the True
In the faiths beneath the sun,
But most upon Allah who gave me two
Sides to my head—not one!

Wesley's following, Calvin's flock,
White or yellow or bronze,
Shaman, Juju, or Angekok,
Minister, Mukamuk, Bonze,

Here's a health, my brothers, to you,
However your prayers are said,
But praised be Allah who gave me two
Separate sides to my head.

I would go without shirt or shoe,
Friend, tobacco, or bread,
Sooner than lose for a minute, the two
Separate sides to my head.[1]

[1] "The Two-Sided Man," Rudyard Kipling: Collected Verse.

It may surprise the layman to realize that, in the final analysis, most of the supposedly unalterable laws of science are similar to our other judgments in that they are faiths based upon reason. A rigid proof, in the absolute sense, is almost a non-existent ideal. Even the so-called laws of mathematics have been attacked on this score. I laugh at, though I do not entirely agree with, Bertrand Russell's witty dictum, "Mathematics may be defined as the subject in which we never know what we are talking about nor whether what we are saying is true." And serious logical difficulties have even been found in the "proof" that two plus two equals four! We may *verify* this as often as we choose, say certain mathematical philosophers, but this is not a *demonstration.*

Forty years ago I was taught and held certain very fixed "faiths" as to atoms. They were minute, indivisible, the ultimate particles of matter. No scientific belief seemed more firmly established than the one that there could not be anything smaller than an atom, and there was at that time no fact which did not fit this theory. Such was our "faith" and creed. We now believe that each atom is a very wonderful and very intricate system of some as yet unknown sort. There was a time when we tried to picture it as a world apart, perhaps not remotely unlike a star-

cluster, with many wonderfully small electrons revolving in fixed orbits of totally unimaginable minuteness and speed. The facts fitted this picture for a time, but within the past five years at least three *newer* theories of atomic structure have sprung up, each partially displacing the one which preceded it. The facts are that we know precisely nothing as to the exact nature of the mechanism of the atom, though by postulating strange and transcendental processes within it we can grind out astonishing and relatively simple *numerical* relationships which fit the facts exhibited in the spectra of radiating matter.

It has even been seriously suggested by physicists of high rank that the true mechanism of the atom may really be something with laws so strange, so unknowable, that the human mind has not yet developed to the point where it could apperceive these laws, even if they were laid bare completely for our study. This sober conjecture is so similar to some of the arguments of the older theology that one's sense of humor is titillated by the analogy. And this conjecture may be true. Does all this indicate that science is uncertain? By no means; rather that science is living, progressing, on its way toward that dream of complete knowledge which we shall never attain. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come,

then that which is in part shall be done away. That is good science and fair philosophy.

But there are radical differences of attitude in scientific and current theological belief. Both rest upon partial knowledge which cannot, in the nature of things, be final. The rigidity of belief demanded by the science of fifty years ago is now largely discarded, nor does science longer pretend to an infallibility. The modern scientist knows that his present theories may be changed overnight by new discoveries, but he actually rejoices in that possibility. It was, in fact, almost overnight that the scientific world threw away its old ten commandments regarding the atom and rushed to accept Bohr's theory, the first of the modern atomic theories. The scientist regards himself as by no means a turn-coat, but he is always ready to "quit his church," abandon his creed, and accept a new one between sunset and sunrise, provided only that the new creed seems a better fit. Has even our present more tolerant religious world so ready and instant an acceptance of new knowledge? Not even the most liberal churchman could make this claim. Rejecting, disclaiming, qualifying, explaining, reconciling, our churches in general during the past fifty years have made a rather sorry picture of fear and dread of new facts about the divine universe they believe their own God created. Prove all things,

hold fast to that which is good, is another excellent scientific motto from a book familiar to many, but it is easily possible to exaggerate the latter portion of this precept.

In the basal lack of finality which appertains to all knowledge, there is, then, not a great deal of difference between our religious and our scientific faiths. We have present faith in certain theories in chemistry and physics simply because they appear to fit in with and to explain certain observed facts, because they seem always to work in the same way when we attempt to verify them, and, finally, because they form at present the easiest and simplest explanation of those facts. I would emphasize here the word "simplest," for Poincaré, the great French mathematical philosopher, has well said that it is the province of the true scientist to accept the simplest and most convenient of possible theories.[1] As a matter of fact,

[1] As several laymen and an occasional scientist have taken exception to this dictum of the great French mathematician, a word or two in illustration may be in order. It is well known to many that there are quite a number of other geometries possible beside the familiar Euclidean variety of our high-school days. I am acquainted with a mathematician who has spent a considerable portion of his life investigating other algebras than our familiar variety—algebras which differ from ours in their initial assumptions and axioms. These other geometries and algebras are all internally self-sufficient and self-consistent, nor can anyone say definitely that our usual geometry is any less "true" than any other of its non-Euclidean brothers. We accept the ordinary geometry and make use of it because it is simpler and more convenient,

"faiths" in the latest atomic theory of the day, in God, in relativity, in agnosticism, in the law of gravity, are basally not very different, and we accept these only when to our individual reasons it appears that things contrary to these "faiths" do not seem to happen, and that these "faiths" are easier and more convenient than the multitude of more complex and intricate theories which might explain the facts equally well.

Can science *prove* the existence of a Supreme Being? Of course not. Can it *disprove* such a belief? This is equally impossible. May it, in its endeavor to arrange its knowledge in an orderly fashion, accept such a theory as a working hypothesis, on the same foundation as other scientific beliefs? Most certainly, provided that we always keep in mind the impossibility of a rigid proof, in the strict philosophical sense. The specifications of such a sane and reasoned belief in a Higher Power will be displeasing to the followers of such creeds as demand a blind, unreasoning, total, unshakable "faith." And yet, in its essence, it is the "faith founded upon reason" so strongly emphasized by the oldest and largest Christian sect.

The questions just propounded are "infinite"

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and prove our common-sense and scientific attitude by so doing. Many other illustrations might be given, as there are generally a multitude of *possible* alternative scientific theories accompanying that *simplest* theory which is accepted and used.

questions, and it is a universally accepted truism that infinite questions can never be fully answered by the finite mind of man. But because we may never answer them completely, shall we therefore push agnosticism to its logical conclusion, sit back, and refuse to speculate about them at all? Such a course would be both foolish and most unscientific. We shall never know completely all that is behind our observed phenomena in the infinite field of science, but this limitation does not prevent us from studying, pondering, exploring, theorizing.

We are sitting in at a very remarkable show. We certainly are not putting this show on ourselves, even though it is doubtless really a totally different show for each one of us. Some unfortunate souls have very poor seats and pronounce the whole show bad, but most of us think it is a wonderful show. It may be the only show we can sit in at; certain it is that at threescore years and ten we are ushered out, and someone else takes our seat. Now the fact that we think about this show is reality; some philosophers would call it our only absolute reality. Science is trying to find out for us all the laws of this show and to arrange them in *orderly* fashion. As spectators in the seats, even though we feel sure that we shall never understand completely all that is going on behind that drop-curtain, we would indeed be morons

if we did not occasionally speculate as to who is giving the show and what it is all about. How did the show start? What is it for? Who is putting it on? As a scientist, I demand the right to think about such questions; my knowledge will never be "orderly" till I give some sort of answer, nor have I any patience whatever with any philosophy which demands that I refrain from making theories to fit problems which may never be totally solvable. Problems which can never be completely solved are meeting me at every turn in chemistry, physics, and astronomy; even heaven would be a very dull place if there were no problems left to solve.

Science and philosophy alike have been able to think of only three methods for explaining this show—that is, three main methods, though there are manifestly a host of minor variations in each method, or combinations drawn in part from two or more groups:

1. It is the creation of a higher power, a Supreme Being, a God.
2. It had and has no creator; there is nothing in the universe but self-created matter and force; it is the chance result of self-created physical forces; a mechanistic universe; pure materialism.
3. It never was created, but has always existed and will always continue to be; the concept of an eternal God in an eternal universe would be included here.

These three possibilities are all variants of an "infinite question," and are hence incapable of proof or disproof. We have but four alternatives; we may accept that one of these three which best orders the existing cosmos to our reasons as a working hypothesis, or we may refuse to consider any of them because they are all incapable of proof. But this last is unscientific.

As a good scientific theory follows the line of least resistance, the scientist, as has already been noted, will in general choose the simplest and most convenient theory, provided it fits the facts. It does not appear that the second of these possibilities, pure materialism, fits the facts as we know facts. It is the opposite of "orderly," while the essential and indispensable characteristic of science is its orderliness. Pure materialism as a first cause is entirely unscientific; it contradicts at once all laws of scientific thought and sequential harmony. As scientists, we may at once rule out pure materialism, and the number who unreservedly accept it today is relatively small.

The third alternative, that this universe always has been, is, on the contrary, a provisionally acceptable scientific hypothesis. In fact, in the light of numerous recent developments, we may say that there is not a little scientific evidence pointing somewhat vaguely in the direction of this possibility. The apparent immortality of

the electron charge in matter and energy, the probable change of matter into energy in those tremendous heat-engines called stars, the possible change of that radiated energy back to matter again, as seems possibly indicated by Millikan's recent work on the cosmic rays, the unbelievably long life cycles of the stars—all these things tend to make the modern scientist at least sympathetic with the possibility that everything has always been. I can show you photographs of Milky Ways so distant that light at its tremendous speed has been a thousand million years on its journey to us, and yet those distant suns seem essentially identical with those which are relatively near to us, or with our own sun, so that we feel sure that a billion years is as a day in the life of a star.

No valid objection can be raised against this theory of an eternal universe save that in our minuteness we think, rightly or wrongly, that we have a right to ask, to what end? Simply to exist, to develop, grow, die, and to start the cycle all over again in a new birth of matter, seems a rather trivial life for a universe which might become quite tiresome if prolonged to eternity! There seems no clear purpose or end in such a universe unless, of course, it be its own aim and end.

It is manifest that to differentiate this possibility from pure materialism we shall need some-

thing else in the universe than mere matter and force. It matters little what we call this other something; "the stuff of the world is mind-stuff" (Eddington); a "will to be" in the ultimate electron; an eternal God in an eternal universe; these, or other pantheistic concepts which go back as far as Plato, are but different names for the same thing.

We may now revert for a moment to the first possibility mentioned—that this universe is in some way the creation of, or guided by, a Higher Power. The act of creation is neither more nor less inexplicable than any other aspect of this infinite question. It is surely neither more difficult nor less difficult (perhaps impossible is the better word) to think of a Supreme Being, an eternal God, than it is to speculate about an infinite or an eternal universe, yet the astronomer frequently has occasion to do that very thing; the true scientist deems nothing forbidden to him merely because it may be unknowable in its totality. This theory is, in some aspects, certainly the simplest working theory of the three possibilities, and it has already been noted that the scientist, other things being equal, chooses the simplest theory to explain the facts. It appears to be somewhat more satisfactory than the concept of an eternal universe, in that all our available evidence seems to force upon us the con-

clusion (which may or may not be true) that through the ages one increasing purpose runs. As a scientist, I demand some sort of a theory; my cosmos must be orderly. I am perfectly willing to admit that in the final analysis my theory may prove false, but I demand it now, to serve as a working basis till I can find a better. We know precisely nothing as to the exact mechanism of electricity or the atom, yet we have certain ever-changing theories which serve us as working hypotheses in a more or less satisfactory manner. My individual reason is forced to the conclusion that more facts in this supremely wonderful universe are explained by the "working hypothesis" of a God than by any of the other possibilities. Therefore, for reasons which appear to me individually to be scientific, and with the willing admission that no present knowledge can be regarded as final, the postulation of an omnipotent God seems necessary. It is probably correct.

To the objector who may point out that my deduction differs only in degree from the actions of primitive man who ascribed to one or another stick-and-stone god all those inexplicable phenomena of nature which seem so clear to us, I can only cheerfully admit the impeachment. The objection is no argument; nearly every present function of life or thought is merely something which differs only in degree from its use by primi-

tive man. Save from the standpoint of anthropology, primitive man's marital gropings do not interest me. What are our present marriage laws? I care little, except historically, for the views of Democritus or Kelvin on atomic structure. What do Bohr, Diraq, or Schrödinger say? "These infinite questions may all be answered in the future." But this is not the future, it is not only *now,* but *my* particular now. The aim of the scientist is to rise to greater heights on stepping-stones of admittedly faulty and imperfect structure or history. The stick-and-stone god was, on the whole, a highly logical procedure, in the light of primitive knowledge; my cosmos is infinitely larger and more complex than that of 20,000 B.C., and my deduction is *now* logical, whatever it may be in A.D. 5,000.

I would, at this point, deny absolutely that this "faith" of mine is in any way the result of early inhibitions or religious affiliations. Having passed through the entire gamut of belief and disbelief, my self-analysis indicates that it is in spite of, rather than because of, such associations that I think as I do. Do a multitude of modern scientists give more or less acceptance to such theories solely because it makes them feel more "comfortable"? I think not. It is true that some philosophers teach that we believe only what we wish to believe. Personally, I feel that I must

acquiesce in any theory of this universe whatsoever, provided only that it is true. While believing in an immortality of some sort (largely from the analogy of the atomic cosmos), I cannot see that it matters much, or is at all essential to my faith. For "Whatever is, is right" must certainly apply to this universe, nor can we think of the cosmos as essentially and intrinsically evil. That cannot be bad which comes to all.

We have already spoken of the trend toward the admission by material science that there is a world of the spirit which is outside, and may conceivably always remain outside, the scope of science. This trend shows itself in many ways—in a small library of books on the subject by leading scientific thinkers, in a multitude of papers and articles, and particularly in the large number of leading present-day scientists who frankly admit that their science is an aid rather than a hindrance to their religious feeling. An undevout astronomer is mad, runs the old phrase. The great Faraday, without whose work there would doubtless be no General Electric today, was an elder in that small and isolated sect known as Sandemanians. It was the eminent Pasteur who said: "Posterity will one day laugh at the sublime foolishness of the modern materialistic philosophers. The more I study nature, the more I am amazed at the work of the Creator. I pray

while I am engaged at my work in the laboratory." Or the great Kelvin: "If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to the belief in God which is the foundation of all religion." Are Faraday, Pasteur, and Kelvin too ancient for this modern day? Then take Pupin: "Science does not prevent a man from being a Christian, but makes him a better Christian. Science has simply brought me to a higher, broader view of the Creator." Or take Einstein, who, like our own Michelson, is a Jew, and both these gentlemen are certainly modern and very much alive. Einstein says: "I do not know whether this theory is God's plan, but I am working at it as though it were." [1] The number of eminent scientists who are men of deep religious feeling is really very large, even though they may be unwilling to commit themselves to the bald statistics of questionnaires. Pasteur, Pupin, Einstein, Millikan, H. N. Russell, Walcott, Angell, Merriam, Noyes, Breasted, Conklin, Abbot, Frost, Barnard, Aitken, Compton, D. C. Miller, Eddington, and a host of others. These will be recognized as scientists of the first rank—men so big in work and brain that they are free to speak as they think, who fear nothing in heaven or earth but untruth.

[1] As quoted from memory by the great Danish physicist, Neils Bohr. The theory referred to is, of course, relativity.

It may be objected that the quoting of the names of eminent men is no actual proof that the thing which they believe is true. Perfectly true; we could collect impressive lists of those authorities who believe in relativity, and also of those who do not; or, if we limited ourselves to a small area on the shore of Lake Michigan, we could collect the names of a number of solid citizens who firmly believe that the earth is flat. But we, like the electron, live in a world of practical compromise, where every action or belief is an act of faith based upon probability.

I have faith to cross Hell Gate Bridge because I know that any probable group of engineering authorities might analyze the strains in its structural members and pronounce it safe. There exists a physician of excellent training and preparation who bombards his medical confrères with pamphlets denying that any disease is caused by germs. I have smiled at one or two of his pamphlets, but have forgotten his name because a common-sense adherence to the laws of probability forces me to reject this Irish majority-of-one strident and noisy objector in favor of that trend of belief held by the great preponderance of physicians. Lists of eminent scientists of religious attitude prove only that the scientific mentality does not exclude religious feeling, which is one of the purposes of this address.

It is probable that already there may have arisen in the minds of more than one reader of this address some such question as the following: even allowing the choice of a Creator as the most convenient working hypothesis, is this to be classified as merely a faith, a feeling, an emotion on your part, or can you support your belief by scientific arguments, or even by those drawn from the principle of analogy or probability? The question is a fair one, though sufficient has already been said as to the impossibility of a rigid proof in the case of "infinite questions," and I have an analogy which is satisfactory to my own reason, whatever may be its shortcomings to the reason of some other person. Dr. Paley's watch has lost none of its value as an argument, even though the principle of evolution has made meaningless those applications which Paley employed, and it goes ticking merrily on after two thousand years of useful life, for the essence of the argument existed many centuries before Paley's time. While my analogy has nothing in common with that famous timepiece, it also is really a very old one, but with distinctly modern trimmings.

Any definition of religion must include an infinite concept. Now we feel sure that infinite concepts, like God, or eternity, or infinite space, are beyond our finite minds in their totality, however much we may grasp of such infinite wholes. Some

may prefer to deny that there exists any such thing as an infinite concept. If, however, we can find some one aspect of the universe where infinity is indicated, or seems probable, or is not denied, then other infinite concepts are made more easy of acceptance. This is a rather important point, philosophically. To repeat, give my mind some fact which science admits as possibly infinite, then another infinite fact becomes not only more understandable, but more easy to accept.

We are surrounded by a multitude of wonderful structures which, though possibly of infinite complexity, do not impress us with this element of infinity simply because they are small. I hold a copper penny in my hand; this penny contains vastly more little electrons whirling in their appointed orbits, or doing something still more unknowable, than is the sum total of all the stars in all the Milky Ways which can be shown by the telescopes of the astronomers. The spoonful of earth which you dig up on a golf course, with appropriate language, generally contains about three times as many little organisms as there are people on the earth. A hen's egg is more complex than a Milky Way, but these structures are small, and we control them in some measure, whereas in the outer universe, which we can never

conceivably control, we already have what we may term a probable infinity.

Astronomy used to teach that the universe of the stars could not possibly be infinite, for if it were the night sky would have to be everywhere as bright as the disk of the sun, and somewhere in the realm there would have to be infinite forces and infinite velocities, both of which conclusions were correct in the light of our former knowledge. But within the past ten years a mathematical proof has been found that the outer universe may be actually infinite and have neither of these things happen. All that is necessary for the universe to go on forever, world without end, is that the stars shall be arranged in great groups or Milky Ways, with certain vastly greater distances separating each such group from its neighbor groups. This is not the place to confuse the reader with these distances, or with the mathematical formulæ involved, but the highly interesting and important fact is that things "outside" seem to be arranged in precisely the way that is demanded by this theory; that is, we do find great groups of a billion or more suns in a structure called a Milky Way, and then distances of a million or more years of light travel to the neighboring brother Milky Ways. In other words, we have right now nothing opposing, and a fairly strong probability in favor of, a universe that is

actually infinite in extent; at this point astronomical mathematics seems to support an infinite concept, already partially substantiated by the observed data. Give me one such infinite concept, and others are easy. Thus we see the very science which has removed some of the older and comfortable spiritual props giving us in place of these a new prop of probable value.

Personally, I do not feel forced to look only outward for our infinities. There seem to be some within and around us—those qualities of truth, ideal beauty, mercy, pity, love, aspiration, sacrifice; truly supernatural qualities in that they seem "superscientific" and impossible to fit in orderly fashion within any philosophy of behaviorism, pragmatism, or "values"; a higher world of spirit infinitely beyond all manifestations of mere matter or force. Bound up with matter, yes, in our very material bodies, and affected in a most vital way by every change, modification, or environment of that matter, but distinct, separate, more divine. We are not machines, unless we completely change our definition of a machine. Strange, queer, wonderful machines we would have to be—machines which would work to the help of other machines by destroying themselves. Such a machine, for example, as Father Damien, which destroyed itself serving and helping a large number of economically worthless and

already doomed machines called lepers. Such a machine as Captain Oates, who, from a pitiful tent down on the Antarctic continent, walked off into the blizzard and let the machine run down in the hope that three other worn, weary, and starving machines might have a better chance to keep on running a while longer. As a matter of fact, the other three machines ran only a short time longer, but before they ran down they left their appreciation of the machine that had destroyed itself to help them, calling it "a very gallant gentleman." That short phrase seems superscientific, nor is it easily ordered in any philosophy of behaviorism. Such foolish scientific machines as have let themselves run down with X-ray burns, Stegomyia stilettos, or Trypanosome tenants! Such machines as the millions who have died for abstract ideals, right or wrong. Not machines!

It has so often been said that science and religion may be of mutual service that the repetition of such a truism here seems jejune and trite. But it is, at best, a somewhat one-sided relationship. Along with many crudities, the simple faith of a densely ignorant man has certain elements of beauty; yet it would seem certain that the highest and truest, as well as sanest, religious life must appertain to those souls which comprehend most about the universe. You may believe, if you

choose, that creation took place at 9 A.M. on October 23, 4004 B.C., and that the earth is flat. Well and good; if your reasoning processes or your faith, or both, lead you irresistibly to these interesting conclusions, it is the best and only possible belief for you. Putting it as delicately as possible, more would be a waste. But, to secure its highest development, the religious spirit needs all that science can give it. Moreover, science must have a soul if it is to include *all* things in this universe in orderly arrangement, if it is to satisfy us with the reasons for phenomena as well as the phenomena themselves. That science and religion are in any essential way mutually exclusive is an error of the past that should be relegated to the past, where it belongs.

Perhaps all that science asks of religion is a fearless tolerance of the results of scientific research and an appreciation of its high and parallel aim. From science religion asks a sympathetic attitude, no more. What does science ask of the churches? This is a far different and far more difficult question. That they fit themselves to, and cease to stand in terror of, scientific knowledge; that they drop, as science has dropped, their claims of infallibility, their relative inflexibility, their fixed, exclusive, unvarying equation of salvation. This process is going to take a very long time, for the inertia of human thought is one of

the most remarkable phenomena in history. I do not think that this process will necessarily mean the obliteration or wholesale amalgamation of creeds and sects, for—

He who launched our Ship of Fools many anchors gave us,
Lest one gale should start them all, one collision stave us.
Praise Him for the petty creeds
That prescribe in paltry needs,
Solemn rites to trivial deeds and, by small things, save us! [1]

But the details of this evolution and transformation must be left to the theologian rather than to the scientist.

[1] "The Supports," Rudyard Kipling.

Religion from the
Standpoint of Psychology

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IV. Religion from the Standpoint of Psychology

by Edward Scribner Ames

SCIENTIFIC psychology is a recent development and may be thought of as beginning with the introduction of the psychology laboratory. The first laboratory was established by the German scholar, Wundt, in Leipzig, in the year 1879. The first laboratory in this country was set up at Johns Hopkins University in 1886 by G. Stanley Hall. Such a laboratory was opened at Yale University in 1892 by E. W. Scripture. I was a student in the first class he taught there in experimental psychology.

The experiment with which we began was that of reaction time. The apparatus was a revolving cylinder on which was fastened a roll of smoked paper. An electrical circuit controlled a metal point which made contact with the paper when the key was touched. When we got a signal from an electric light we were to touch the key as quickly as possible, and the point made a waving line on the drum. It was thus possible for us to measure the time required to receive the

stimulus through the eye and to respond by the movement of the finger on the key. The variation between different students in the class was measurably great, and by indicating such characteristics of individuals it becomes important in many ways, particularly in the manipulation of delicate machines. It has been applied in testing persons with reference to starting in a race at a given signal, in controlling levers, in machine processes of manufacture, and in operating automobiles and similar devices.

Many other problems were introduced for measuring different sensory, muscular and emotional reactions. These could be complicated through the requirement for judgment and decision where discrimination had to be made before response occurred. At the present time such laboratories are to be found in every well-equipped college with a bewildering number and variety of instruments for measuring various kinds of stimuli and responses under varying conditions.

Such experiments indicate the character of modern psychology. It is an attempt to observe carefully the facts and to discover the laws and processes of mental life. So far as possible it employs the quantitative method, the method of exact measurement. This has led to the minute study of the physical organism and of the rela-

tion between bodily and mental states. Such problems belong to what is called physiological psychology.

A further extension of this objective, factual method has been applied to the mental life of animals and is known as comparative or animal psychology. Since it is impossible for rats, dogs, and monkeys to communicate their experiences directly by language it is necessary to study their mentality in terms of their behavior. By setting problems for them, such as opening simple food boxes, or requiring them to make their way through a labyrinth of passages called a maze, to food, it is possible to observe their performance and to measure the time it requires through successive trials to learn the quickest route to the food box which serves as a stimulus.

Proceeding from this general standpoint and method there has arisen what is known as behavioristic psychology, or behaviorism. Primarily this word behaviorism designates a method and is properly used only in this way. When behaviorism is used to designate a particular theory of life, or the non-existence of consciousness, it has been perverted from its proper meaning and use. Behaviorism as a method is recognized by all psychologists as valuable and fruitful, but is rejected by most of them when employed as a

theory or a philosophy about the nature of consciousness.

Since all organized human effort involves special forms of behavior or systems of habit, psychology is a science which may be applied to all kinds of performance. We therefore have the psychology of business, particularly of salesmanship and advertising; psychology of education; psychology of art; and even the psychology of golf. In the same way we have a psychology of religion.

The psychology of any subject means the study of the interests, impulses, desires, needs, habits, emotions which belong to that subject. In the psychology of religion we have to do with the hopes and fears, the wishes and works, the ceremonials, rituals, acts, and attitudes which are found in religious practices. The psychologist endeavors to examine the whole field of religious experience. He asks primarily, what is done? How is the individual behaving? What is he doing when he goes to church? When he prays? When he engages in religious ceremony? Psychologists do not claim that all things in religion or in any other field can be fully explained by this method or by any other method. They do, however, claim the right to make the effort to observe the facts, to analyze and classify them, and to organize a hypothesis about them. No scientist in any field, much less in religion, expects to

know all about the subject which he treats, or to settle all questions about it. An inquiry is regarded as scientific when it uses the method of science, maintains the scientific spirit of careful, thorough observation, and is cautious about its generalizations.

The science of psychology encounters difficulty in making a scientific study of religion, because of the feeling that religion is too intimate and sacred a subject for such a matter-of-fact study. Religion is so vital, so personal, and so sensitive a matter that it seems like meddling with untouchable things to apply to it the scientific method.

This is not a difficulty limited to religion. I remember a young woman in college who came to me for advice about her studies. When I suggested that she should take some work in science, she hesitated and was extremely adverse to doing so. I recommended particularly the study of botany, but she said she was afraid that the study of botany would spoil her love of flowers! It is not difficult to appreciate how persons not given to scientific reflections should feel this way about matters in which they have a deep emotional interest. This is particularly true with reference to religion, which involves the most important concerns of human life.

During the last thirty years the application of psychology to religious problems has been carried

on with growing interest and great fruitfulness. I will specify some of the important problems which have been dealt with, and concerning which an extensive literature has developed.

The first studies in the psychology of religion were concerned with the general question as to the circumstances and the times at which persons become identified with the church or, as is said, "get religion." Professor Starbuck and Professor Coe, just at the beginning of this century, were among those who pioneered in this field. They used the questionnaire method and interviewed in this way hundreds of men and women to discover the age at which persons became interested in religion and the circumstances which occasioned that interest. They found a striking correspondence between the majority of conversions and the period of adolescence. Something like 75 per cent of all individuals who become religious in the sense of identifying themselves with religious institutions do so in the years between the ages of ten and twenty-five. It was found that at the ages of twelve, sixteen and nineteen there were high points in the curve representing the conversion experience of persons interviewed. The conversions at the age of twelve were characterized by an acceptance of the religious customs of the group or family with which the individuals were identified. They were influenced by suggestion

and gave relatively little evidence of emotional stress or intellectual difficulties. At the age of sixteen the emotional reactions were much more in evidence, and at the age of nineteen the intellectual problems were conspicuous. In general the sexes differed in a fairly uniform way, girls responding to the religious influence at about two years earlier than boys. It also became evident that girls were more inclined to emotional conversions and boys to more reflective, intellectual stress.

Having discovered the age when conversion occurs, the question then arose as to why it happens. What is the cause? Is it due to an inherited religious sense which appears at the beginning of adolescence? Or is it, like language, an achievement of each generation which has to be learned under the influence of social interaction? The psychologists agree that there is no innate religious instinct, but this is not a fact peculiar to religion.

It is now agreed that there are no instincts in the sense in which that term has come to be used. The term itself is disappearing from the vocabulary of psychology. What are now recognized as original with the organism are impulses and reflexes—random movements and specific actions called reflexes, such as winking, swallowing, grasping, sucking, coughing, sneezing, and so forth.

From these movements of indefinite and specific kinds are developed coördinations, or habits, and emotional attitudes which may accompany them. Thus it is said the organism is "conditioned" to certain forms of behavior. The example most frequently cited is that of a dog stimulated by the odor and taste of food which produce a flow of saliva. If a bell is rung at the same time that the food is presented it will presently happen that the saliva flows at the sound of the bell. In other words, the dog becomes conditioned to the sound of the bell as a substitute for the direct stimulus of the food. The habits and reactions established in this manner are very numerous and pertain to a great variety of situations. A humorous illustration is that of a man walking with a friend. The friend noticed that at every corner the man put out his left arm. When asked why he did this, the man replied, "That is all that is left of my automobile."

The developments in connection with religious experience are, of course, exceedingly complicated. Ceremonial customs occur in connection with the stress of unusual situations, such as those of seed time and harvest, birth of children, marriage, and illness. Characteristic ceremonials arise in such crises among all primitive peoples and in all societies of every degree of development. Our Thanksgiving-day ceremonials may be taken as

an example. The first Thanksgiving festival in American history was connected with the period of lack of food and threatened starvation, preceding the first harvest of the Pilgrim Fathers. With the gathering of the grain and the securing of rich supplies of food in the autumn it was natural that feasting and revelry should follow. This recurrence of the seasons in agricultural life affords a similar situation each year, and with the gathering of the harvest the ceremony of Thanksgiving is an immediate response, and also becomes related to the historical form of celebration.

Another instance which is notable in religious history is the Passover feast of the Israelites. In their suffering and bondage in Egypt they undertook an escape which was marked by a hasty preparation of the common meal in which the use of the lamb was a characteristic feature. From that time each year the recurrence of the season stimulated that response and the custom became a permanent feature of the Hebrew religion. In other words, in terms of modern psychology, this group became conditioned to that particular reaction under the stimulus of the rebirth of their flocks and the memory of their release from bondage. Thus ceremonials have grown up among various peoples in connection with their food supply and the adjustments necessary to the physical environment under which they lived.

This accounts for the diversity of customs corresponding to the varying environment, but the principle of the ceremonial is the same among all peoples. It is a celebration of the great crises of life.

The younger generation grows up into these fixed customs of the group and learns from its elders the traditions, and also the experiences, for itself. After a person comes to the age of discernment and appreciation he begins to see the reasons for such customs and feels the impulse to respond in the ways suggested by the customs of his group. His active participation marks his entrance into the life of the society of which he is a part and indicates his readiness to become initiated in a positive and understanding way into the religious ceremonials of his people.

This development of religious customs is analogous to the learning of the language of his group. He does not develop a language independent of the associations of his fellows and he does not create a system of his own. He naturally falls into the ways and the speech of those about him. There is every reason to believe that if he did not have such association he would not develop language at all. Language, like other social customs, is thus characterized as conduct which emerges originally in the experience of the group and is appropriated along the lines of least

resistance by the individuals who are born into it. The religious life as illustrated by such participation in ceremonial customs cannot, therefore, be said to arise through characteristics of the individual independent of his experience, but rather as the response to models already formulated in the social life.

The origin of religion has therefore come to be regarded as due to the experiences of social groups, and for the individual it is a taking over of the modes of behavior which he finds already developed about him. These customs in a long period of history are modified by the changing environment and the conditions of life within the group. Thus it happened when the Hebrews passed over from a nomadic to an agricultural form of life their religion took on agricultural characteristics. The use of bread and wine came with the cultivation of the soil and the care of vineyards. While these did not displace the nomadic feast of the Passover they were added as distinguishing features which depended upon the new mode of life of the people.

Another characteristic which the psychologists point out is that the human being is found not to be primarily concerned with ideas and emotional attitudes, but rather with an active life in maintenance of his welfare in the face of nature. Man is a creature of appetite, of hunger, and of rest-

less, ceaseless, recurring craving. Such ideas as he develops are incident to the need for new adjustments in his growing life. The degree to which man becomes a reflective, thinking being is determined by the necessity for adjustments to a more complex and changing world. In modern psychology this point of view has come to be known as voluntarism—the doctrine that the will, in the sense of active effort to control the conditions of life, is predominant.

Schopenhauer, who lived in the middle of the nineteenth century, was one of the first to see this clearly and to formulate the theory. He insisted that man is a dynamo of impulsive energy, moved by hunger and want, and to a very large extent achieves his adjustments to the physical and social environment in relatively subconscious ways. He is a passionate emotional creature long before he becomes reflective and thoughtful. The way in which we still use our reason or intellect illustrates its secondary character. We are constantly rationalizing or justifying our wishes and our impulsive desires. We try to think out reasons for what we want done. A story from war time illustrates this tendency. A young man consulted his father about entering the service, but was evidently hesitant about doing so. His father reminded him that he always had two chances. He said: "If you offer yourself, you may be rejected,

and then you are all right. But if you are accepted, you still have two chances. You may be kept in this country, and then you are all right. But if you are sent abroad, you still have two chances. They may give you a job in Paris, and then you are all right. But if they send you to the front, you still have two chances. You may not be wounded, and then you are all right. But if you are wounded, you still have two chances. You may be sent back to the hospital and get well, and then you are all right. But if you die, you still have two chances."

The achievement of disinterested, scientific, rational attitudes about our experience and the objects with which we have to deal is one of the most difficult things which man accomplishes. Thinking comes hard for the natural man, and ordinarily our minds run along in the grooves of our habitual activity. This is strikingly illustrated in our periods of reverie and day-dreaming. Most of our mental reactions conform to our experiences in practical affairs. We are for the most part remembering or imaging situations, and following the patterns of our daily activity.

Conversations around the table and among friends in ordinary contact are largely those of reminiscences and the recital of the efforts which have made vivid impressions upon us. In large part our religious ceremonials are the revival of

these activities accompanied by the recital of the dangers or stress from which we have escaped in some striking and impressive way. This is illustrated in the religious doctrines which accompany our experience. The creeds are formulations of experiences which have been built up in our struggles to develop and maintain social organization. At the present time society is undergoing such marked changes in the habits of living that the older creeds no longer express what we are constantly experiencing. This is impressively illustrated by the fact that we now live in a world not primarily agricultural, but in an industrial age characterized by a widespread use of machinery. One of the consequences of this type of life is the development of great cities where individuals are occupied, not so much in direct relation to the soil as in manufacturing processes and in the control of life by means of mechanical devices. The use of tools, and the association of individuals expert in different lines of organized industry, become preëminent.

It is said that the city man has an entirely different feeling about the world of nature and the maintenance of himself in the social processes. He erects vast buildings and builds great highways. Means of transportation and communication occupy his attention and offer him the means of subsistence. He therefore tends to develop the

feeling that the control of life is more directly within his own hands, and is less dependent upon a mysterious overhead Providence. Instead of feeling his direct relation to the mysterious powers of nature, as is more characteristic in an agricultural society, he recognizes the importance of taking responsibility for his own safety and maintenance. He more obviously creates the conditions under which he lives and is able to exert a far greater control. Even the diseases which beset him and the conflicts which arise in his contacts with his fellow men are felt to be more and more subject to his power. His life is throughout demanding his own initiative and inventive resourcefulness, rather than dependence upon unknown mysterious spirits.

There is in this way afforded a new conception of the meaning of many of the old theological terms as applied to present-day conditions. For example, the exercise of "faith," which has always played so important a part in civilized religions, may be seen from the psychological point of view to be an expression of man's confidence in the normal working of the forces with which he is surrounded. He has faith in his fellow men, in the regularity of their habits of action, in their ability to project plans and to achieve their realization. Faith is not so much concerned with the recognition of mysterious realities which he can-

not perceive, but more with the operation of laws and systems within which he works. In our common speech the term faith is used with reference to faith in our fellow men, faith in the possibility of social organization, in the values of education, and in the discovery of methods by which life may be enriched and controlled.

Man is everywhere constantly reaching out for more effective means of living. His scientific inquiries and business organizations are expressions of his conviction that it is possible by effort and coöperation to master the conditions of his life. In every realm, whether in practical business affairs or in the experiments of the scientific laboratory, man is looking forward to the discovery of new methods and the achievement of hitherto unknown means of life and control of the world. In the larger outlook men begin to have faith in the possibility of building a society on the earth which shall be marked by greater good will and mutual aid. This is everywhere recognized as genuine religious faith. We have faith in our fellow men, in their integrity, in their willingness to coöperate in behalf of enterprises which they feel may bring greater security and happiness. As a consequence the idea of faith as belief in invisible powers, or in life after death, tends to be only a part, and perhaps with many people the lesser part, of their religious attitudes. They are con-

stantly associating themselves together to project into the future better systems of government, of social welfare, and of human amelioration. The primary test of religious faith may thus come to be more a matter of confidence in our human nature, in our fellow men, in the power of an associated life, and in the ideals and spirit of Jesus, than primarily belief in the evidence of supernatural powers which control our destiny.

This is not to say that the element of mystery fades out of our religious experience. All of our life is still sufficiently mysterious, even in the most practical things we accomplish. So familiar a force as electricity, used as it is in so many significant and practical ways, is still not completely understood. But the significant things with reference to electricity in our time are those which we can utilize in our mechanisms for communication, illumination, and transportation. In connection with all the most familiar operations there are still unexplained and unfamiliarized mysteries. But insistence upon these is not the means of successful adjustments in our lives. We may have faith in the possibility of the further development and use of physical forces, but this faith is increasingly based upon the achievements already made and upon what is already known.

The religious attitude, like our most practical attitude, is one of action, of a putting forth of

energy and effort to control conditions, rather than simply to understand them. In the past, religion has been more a matter of contemplation and meditation upon the processes of nature and life, whereas today in our industrial age it is more and more a matter of active effort in doing things. As Bertrand Russell has said, the modern man, unlike the mediæval man, does not so much meditate upon nature as he endeavors to control it. "We do not contemplate a flea; we catch it." And in general we do not sit down in a mere attitude of wonder and sentiment about the world, but we seek to manipulate it and use it for our various purposes. Religion itself has thus come to be thought of as a practical enterprise—building a heavenly kingdom, creating a society in which men may live together with understanding, sympathy, and coöperative power.

Psychologists have also developed a new conception of the self, or soul, in keeping with the practical attitude already described. Instead of regarding the soul as a mysterious entity of an entirely different order from that which we perceive and experience, the self is regarded as an organization of habits and of powers by which the individual takes his place in a social and practical life. This self undergoes a development from infancy to maturity. From the first gleams of feeling and sentiency the individual gradually ar-

rives at the ability to communicate with those about him, to guide his actions in accordance with the requirements of the world in which he lives. The self of the individual develops in interaction with other members of his group. It is by his ability to understand them, and to participate in their activities, that he recognizes himself as an individual and knows other selves about him.

One of the great controversies of modern psychology relates to this fact. The extreme advocates of behaviorism have taken their cues from the simpler forms of animal life because they are able to account for the performances of animals in terms of the stimulation of these complex organisms, and the reaction patterns built up in response. By the process of conditioning animal responses they have inferred that it is possible to account for human behavior in the same way. They are inclined, therefore, to discount the function of so-called consciousness and the processes of thought. For them thinking is a matter of the use of language, and the processes which have been attributed to memory and reflection are accredited to the habits of the organism and to the delicate readjustments which the refined nervous system of man makes possible. This, of course, becomes a crucial matter in the interpretation of religion.

Religion has attached more importance to personality and to the powers of reflection and of creative effort. It is not strange that the advocates of extreme behaviorism discount the claims of religion. They naturally have difficulty in giving credence to the functions of the self which are most prized in religious experience. There are certain facts, however, which the psychologists of the less extreme behavioristic schools regard as justifying a greater importance in the conception of the self and its function. Certain examples appear in the use of language, which is undoubtedly fundamental in the development of the self. There is an obvious difference between the language of parrots and very young children and that of developed human beings. The parrot's repetition of words is mechanical and routine. Characteristic language of persons is that which employs words for the meaningful designation of objects. The parrot is unable to associate words with objects in any such free and meaningful way as is a child of five years. There is no reason to suppose that the parrot can identify objects by their names, whereas a child may do so in a very great variety of situations. He can ask for things he desires and can make selection between the objects presented to him, welcoming or rejecting according to the system of signs which are the words he uses. An

illustration of this free use of words is given by Bertrand Russell in criticism of Watson's behavioristic explanation. Russell says he may say to one person, "I met Mr. Jones in the train today," and to another, "Joseph was in the 9:35 this morning." With the exception of the words "in the," these two sentences have nothing in common, yet they may relate the same fact, and I may use either indifferently when I recall the fact. Thus my recollection is certainly not a definite verbal habit. Or again he says he may use the expression, "Jacob is older than Joseph," or, "Joseph is younger than Jacob," and in either case the meaning of the difference in age is expressed. Whereas in the formal procedure of the parrot's use of language there would be no such alternative. This ability to freely employ words in varying orders and combinations to express the same idea is a stage which none of the lower orders achieve.

Another illustration of the difference between the consciousness of a human being and of the lower orders is in the ability to play different rôles and to recognize oneself in these performances. The familiar play of children illustrates this. When children play "Indians" or "soldiers" they consciously assume characters differing from their ordinary habit and yet are aware that they are doing so. The ability to thus assume differ-

ent relations and still to maintain their own identity in the process is an expression of what we mean by the possession of a self.

When a person is able to designate himself by name and to carry on complex activity in relation to other persons he has arrived at a stage which no animal achieves. This is what is meant by consciousness of self, or by self-consciousness. Such a person is able to refer to himself by name and to distinguish himself from other people. Such a view of the self does not indeed carry with it the metaphysical implications which have formerly been connected with the idea of the self. It does not refer to some peculiar kind of entity which the individual possesses, but exhibits a practical or functional process within which the individual maintains his own identity and for practical purposes enables him to guide his conduct in reference to the actions of other persons.

A still more searching problem in connection with the nature of the self which is crucial in the religious field is that of the power of the individual to control his own behavior. This involves the matters which have often been discussed in the subject of the freedom of the will, or the power of self-determination. It is a favorite argument of the extreme behaviorists, as of the old metaphysical determinists, that the responses and actions of an individual are determined by the subtle

and unseen forces of his character and of the environment in which he moves. It is, of course, impossible to defend the old theory of indeterminism or of complete arbitrary control of one's conduct.

It is certainly true that a man can act only within the character which he has developed and within the habits which he has achieved. But there is one peculiarity of human conduct which within this limitation is of the utmost importance. This is the ability of the individual to recall various experiences relating to a given situation and to make some selection among them. When we are called upon to act in a practical situation we may delay our decision upon it. This phenomenon of "delayed response," as it is called by the psychologists, is one of the most characteristic features of human conduct. When a man makes a proposition to you to enter into a business association you may reply, "I will think it over," or, "I will give you an answer next week." The lower animals have no such capacity. They react to present and immediate stimuli and are helpless with reference to any such degree of delayed response or deferred action. When a human being postpones his action he is able in the meantime to take into account the various possibilities. He runs over in his mind the possible lines of conduct. He imagines himself in the various sit-

uations proposed. He imagines the outcome. He sees himself doing the things that would be involved in his choice of a given procedure, and it is particularly in the light of the desire he has to be that kind of a person that he welcomes or rejects the proposal made. This delayed response, with the dramatic rehearsal of possible types of conduct, is the process in which the self controls to some extent its action and its development.

There is a similar observation in modern psychology that to some extent a man determines his personality by the habits which he forms and the practice which he cultivates. There is, of course, no such thing as unlimited freedom, but there is a degree of freedom in this type of behavior. A man who has never learned to play the piano is not really free to do so, no matter how much his friends urge him. At least he is not free until he learns the technique of the performance. This is illustrated by the story of the man who was asked whether he could play the violin. He replied, "I do not know; I never have tried it!"

The freedom to speak a language involves training in it. Freedom to drive an automobile is at least partly the mastery of the mechanics of the machine. Within this kind of freedom there is a great field for development and mastery. Increasingly religion involves a participation in a social process in coöperation with one's fellows

for the achievement of a better and more ideal society. From this point of view it is not difficult to see how important this conception of the self becomes. If we are able to understand language, to know the meaning of terms, and to set up ends for our action by means of ideas, then there is a possibility of working together for the realization of practical ends. Perhaps the force of the criticism of the extreme behaviorist is in the fact that religion has so often claimed the power of achieving results without taking into account adequately the practical means necessary for such ends. But where religion is made a matter of social behavior and coöperation it is obvious that it escapes the force of such criticism.

Psychology, from the point of view here presented, is therefore compelled to recognize further forms of interest and behavior which belong to religious experience. It does indeed justifiably eliminate certain types of religious experience and puts the emphasis upon the more practical and verifiable modes of activity. Psychology thus may become a useful means of criticism of the religious interest, but it is not antagonistic to religion as such, any more than it is antagonistic to any other form of practical behavior. Religion is like other practical concerns in that it arises from impulses and from formed habits antecedent to the criticisms and observations of the scientific

psychologists. Religion is no more dependent upon the formulations of psychology than agriculture is upon the findings of chemistry. Chemistry, however, may bring great enlightenment as to the processes of agriculture, knowledge of soil, and laws of growth. In the same way psychology may furnish a means of the better understanding of religious behavior and look toward greater efficiency in the activities characteristic of religion.

Professor Otto, in his book, *Things and Ideals,* has given a new version of the soul. After dismissing the old idea of the soul as a metaphysical entity, he defends the soul as a description of character. When a man is hard and unsympathetic, we say he has no soul. When he is kindly and generous, we say he has a soul. If he is intelligent, interested in beauty and in idealistic enterprises, we credit him with having a soul. In this way we make the term equivalent to enlightened, refined character. It then expresses the great human values, which are also, at their best, the values of religion. From this point of view the old moral challenge still has full force, What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

Religion from the Standpoint of Philosophy

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V. Religion from the Standpoint of Philosophy

by Mont Robertson Gabbert

ANY view of religion which one gets from philosophy depends on the philosophy from which the view is seen. It is necessary, therefore, to indicate the character of the philosophy in terms of which a statement of religion is made.

Two great systems of philosophy have struggled for mastery since the beginning of philosophy—idealism and realism. Their attitude toward religion should be considered separately.

Since Parmenides declared that what *can be thought* and what *can be* are the same, idealism has sought to understand the world from that standpoint. It has been held that mind or reason is the fundamental constituent of all reality. Everything which exists is said to be dependent on mind for its qualities, its relations, and its very existence. Whatever is rationally possible is also an existent fact, and whatever is rationally impossible cannot exist. Reason is not only constitutive of reality, but is also the measure of reality, and the limiting principle beyond which no reality

is possible. In this point of view, mind is not so much the explorer and the discoverer of reality as it is the creator of reality.

Idealism also asserts that truth is one and is everywhere self-consistent. The whole realm of reality must fit into a single system of ultimate truth. There has always been something timeless and changeless in idealism, and no place has been found in reality for radical contradictions. Truth is one, and consistency or non-contradiction is its measure.

Idealism has not been satisfied with a knowledge that is tentative and piecemeal, but has sought a knowledge that is universal and necessary. It has, of course, recognized that individuals are ignorant in many ways, has even emphasized the limited and partial character of the human mind, but always there has been the ideal of a complete and perfect knowledge which the All-knowing possesses and toward which the philosopher strives. In the attempt to reach such perfect knowledge, the idealist has always had a strain of mysticism, and the highest point of philosophic knowledge is reached when the philosopher "beholds," "contemplates," or is "united with" the highest reality. The very imperfection of our knowledge implies a Mind which grasps that which is beyond our reach.

Moral idealism and philosophical idealism are

easily allied, and in many cases the one is an outgrowth of the other. The classic example of this point of view is Plato. He will defend, against all comers, the faith of his master, Socrates, that no harm can come to a good man, living or dead. He will not agree that anyone will do wrong, knowing it to be wrong, nor will he admit that "one who knows" will do evil in return for evil. If we must choose between suffering evil and doing evil, the wise man will suffer rather than do evil. Neither he that does nor he that suffers evil is in the happiest possible state, but of the two, he that suffers is the more enviable, and he that does evil should demand punishment in order that the evil may be removed and his soul restored to health. All this and much more indicates the high moral position which Plato assumes.

The moral idealism of Plato is based upon, or, what may be truer to fact, leads to his philosophical idealism. In his systematic position, goodness and beauty are among the eternal ideas and realities. Indeed, he argues that there is no way to explain our knowledge of these things, to say nothing of our knowledge in general, except by assuming that our souls existed in a previous life, where they beheld these *ideas* pure and unmixed with the shadows of this fleeting world. And his most fundamental position concerning true knowledge, set forth in the figure of the philosopher's

escape from the cave, makes goodness the sun whose brightness illumines every other *idea.* Goodness alone shines in its own light, and even truth shines with the reflected light from this source. If truth is declared eternal, much more is goodness eternal.

Later idealism has always been influenced by Plato, but has not been identical with him. But by the very genius of its point of view it has sought some way to insure the permanence of moral values.

It is easy to see that such a philosophy as has been described will be favorable to religion. The mystic strain which has been pointed out as the direct beholding and apprehension of reality seems to be the same sort of experience as that of the religious mystic. Indeed, in such a representative as Plotinus, it would be difficult to say whether his union with God is rightly called a religious experience or a philosophical insight. *Insight,* or union with the highest reality, it is, and probably the best statement is to leave the alleged fact without interpretation.

The final ground for the unity of truth also fits in with the faith of religion. This unity is grounded in the world reason which constitutes and creates both the objects and the minds which know them. Both the knower and the known are moments in the Infinite Reason which is all and in

all. It has been easy to identify the God of religion with this All-encompassing Reality, and idealism has called God the Great First Cause, Being, the Ultimate Reality, the Ultimate Substance, the Supreme Individual, and many other such names. Having made the identification, any argument which the philosopher can devise to prove the philosophic position becomes at once a proof of the existence of God.

A like result follows from the claims to certainty of knowledge. There is, in the very nature of reason, the basis for knowledge of eternal and infinite reality. It may be that any given system of thought fails to reach such knowledge, on account of our finite character. But even our failure points beyond itself to a knowledge which is perfect. In last analysis, our feeblest efforts to know point beyond themselves to a knowledge which is complete and perfect. If, however, our imperfect knowledge implies that which is perfect, it has been easy to identify such perfection with the omniscience of God. Once more the philosophy becomes the servant and handmaiden of theology.

The service to religion which is implied in the affirmation of the reality and permanence of moral values is too evident to need further comment.

If, however, idealism has done yeoman service for religion, it has also had much to say which religious men have not found to their liking. It

has insisted that truth is one, and, as a consequence, it has not been patient with religious ideas which offend against its sense of the fitness of things. Plato would banish Homer and Hesiod from his Republic, because they present a picture of the gods which is not in accord with the dignity and worth of good men. He is also too confident that we have both the power and the responsibility to discover and achieve the good life to allow him to seek some escape from ignorance and weakness through divine grace. Spinoza will not allow any place for miracles in his perfectly ordered world, but will approach and worship in the dignity of his own insight.

If idealism has had a strain of mysticism in its great moments, this has not been an unmixed service to institutional religion. The mystical experience, or the direct beholding of reality, gives the beholder an assurance of knowledge which makes him independent of authority. If one can approach God and worship him on one's own account, what value does the institution have? It may, to be sure, supply the atmosphere in which such approach is easy, and it may furnish certain aid for the seeker, but it is not indispensable as a means, nor is it authoritative as an interpreter. As a consequence, as Windelband has pointed out, the mystic strain in Christianity has been a source of much heresy and disturbance.

The identification of God with the Being or Reality of the philosophy has given us the God of the infinite attributes. As has been pointed out, it has given us such names for God as First Cause, Supreme Being, Ultimate Substance, and others of like import. In the case of Spinoza, it has denied will, purpose, or even intelligence to God. It is difficult for a man in the moment of religious activity to identify the God whom he worships in any such terms. William James once said, "No man ever worshiped that old metaphysical monster." The demand for a different sort of God has affected religion in so many ways that it is unnecessary to point out specific instances.

Idealism has made experience unreal and illusory; it has denied the fact of evil as evil; it has made it necessary to define salvation as an escape from what is characteristically human, rather than as a revaluation and transformation of the human. It is a strange sort of salvation which has to deny and escape from the very thing in need of salvation. No one has been able to give any very satisfactory account of evil, but it would seem to be a safe method to start with the admission that it is a fact and to end with it in the same status. The problem would seem to be the discovery of a method for dealing with evil as a fact. If it is to be destroyed, one would feel better if it were possible to say that one had met it as

a fact and overcome it in a real struggle for mastery, rather than that one had discovered that evils are shadows and had safely escaped from unreal enemies.

In concluding a brief survey of the religious implications of idealistic philosophy one must say, I believe, that one is not dealing with a strictly contemporary point of view. The great living idealists are all dead. Of those listed as idealists in Perry's *Philosophy of the Recent Past,* only Croce and Gentile were living when his book was published in 1926. This does not mean that there are no living representatives of the point of view, but rather that the spirit of contemporary philosophy is for the most part of another sort.

The second of the great philosophic traditions starts with the postulate that one of the characteristics of reality is its independence of mind. It may be difficult to assign any other quality, but whatever qualities it has, it has them apart from its relation to mind in exactly the same way as when it is related to mind. Independence of mind and existence in its own right are affirmed of whatever is real.

The history of realism shows no single attitude toward religion. It has been sometimes hostile and sometimes friendly, so that while religious men can generally assume that idealism will not be fundamentally hostile, they must scrutinize

any realistic philosophy before discovering what its attitude will be. Whether it has been hostile or friendly has depended in large measure on the positive character which has been assigned to the reality or realities existing in an independent relation with mind.

If we consider first the position of the Greek Atomists, we have a realism which became the basis for an anti-religious attitude. Democritus and Leucippus asserted that a complete explanation of the world could be stated in terms of atoms and a void. The differences among the atoms were differences of quantity. That is to say, they differed in size, shape, position, and arrangement. There was no difference in quality. None the less, it was asserted that there were mind or soul atoms. The difference between these soul atoms and other atoms lay in the fact that these were very much finer than others. Atoms, differing thus among themselves, were declared to be real, and the only fundamentally real things. The "void" furnished a place for their movement. Given such atoms, given their motion as original and eternal, and given empty space in which they moved, these thinkers asserted that the differences of size, shape, etc., among them would develop a "vortex," and hence a gradual appearance of bunches of atoms bound together, which bunches would be the objects of the world. In the same

process which produced objects, minds would be produced. As objects are the temporary organizations, or "bunches" of atoms, so also are minds the finer atoms temporarily held in the interstices of the larger atoms constituting such "bunches." With the continuation of the process in which the "bunch" comes together, it is separated, releasing the finer atoms held within the bunch, whereupon both the object and the mind dissolve into their original elements and become once more scattered components of the vortex.

There is a saying attributed to Democritus which recognizes a difference in the relation of different qualities to objects which is significant. He says, "According to convention, there is a bitter and a sweet, a hot and a cold, and according to convention there is color. In truth, there are atoms and a void." All those experiences and judgments having to do with any qualities of objects or of the world other than of motion, size, etc.—spatial qualities, in a word—deal with convention only. Thus one will find it impossible to give moral and religious values, as well as artistic value, any other than conventional significance. The world of reality is set over against these conventions of men as of a sort which does not contain them and which has no concern with them.

The Epicureans adopted this metaphysics as the basis of their ethical theory. The wise man

could not reach the calm and unruffled life of pleasure so long as he had any faith that this world is created and governed by the gods. Consequently, the first step toward wisdom is the recognition that the world was not created by the gods at all, but has come to its present condition as the natural result of the motion and bunching of atoms. In the process in which the world arose, men have also arisen. By the same token, the gods will not judge the world or us, but rather, as creatures of a day, we shall be dissolved by the same process which produced us. The wise man considers only how he may most pleasantly spend such time as he finds himself in the world. He does not imagine that his ideas or his ideals make any difference to the world, but sees that he only is affected. The great service which the wise man can offer to his fellows is a way to disillusionment and a program for the disillusioned.

Realism, in the form discussed above, lends itself to the destructive criticism of religion. This is true, not because of the fact that it is realism, but because of the sort of thing which it took to be real. The mediæval form of realism—derived from Aristotle in the main, but in many respects similar to the idealism of Plato—furnished the terms in which the church interpreted its doctrines and its life.

Mediæval realism asserted that things are real

in proportion as they are universal, and unreal in proportion as they are particular. Consequently, apple is more real than an apple, and fruit is more real than either. Value and perfection also were held to be in direct proportion to universality, so that the more universal is the more real, and also the more perfect. Moreover, in any situation where more and less universal are in causal relations, the more universal was held to be the active and the less universal the passive member of the relationship. Consequently, the explanation of the world is to be found in the creative activity of The Most Universal Being. But, the Most Universal Being is God. Hence, the mediæval realist is religious. Thomas Aquinas, a "modified realist," but still a realist, is able to make the lasting statement of the doctrines of the church, a statement which remains the basis of orthodoxy until now. The difference between this form of realism and that considered above lies in the positive character assigned to the things declared to be real. These real things partook of the nature of reason and mind, while those were material particles. On these was erected a systematic statement of faith, on those, a systematic statement of unbelief.

Near the end of the nineteenth century, idealism had practical control of philosophic thought. It is true that there was a *saving remnant* who clung to a realistic position, and that the realistic

tradition had allies both within and without philosophy as such. It cannot be doubted that common sense is realistic in its outlook, as also is the progress of practical activity. Beefsteak and bread, stones and rivers, stars and seas, are *there* for practical purposes, and common sense feels that something violent is proposed when it is asked to believe that the essence of things is that they are perceived, or even that the mind finds laws in nature because it first gave laws to nature. Perry is right in asserting that the common sense view needs proof less than it needs defense against the attacks of idealistic criticism.

There were two developments in the fields of the sciences which stimulated the reaction toward realism even during the period of the greatest vogue of idealism. Perry has briefly stated these developments in his treatment of naturalism. The advance of the physical and biological sciences led to two grand generalizations—the theory of the conservation of energy and the theory of evolution.

Each of these ideas was to have its initial influence on philosophical thought turned to the advance of realism, and also to the disadvantage of religion. If we take the evolutionary idea and place it in the setting of space and time, prepared on the one hand by the astronomers, and on the other hand by the geologists, it presents us with

a natural process developing under its own steam, so to speak, in the course of which the cosmos has gradually assumed its present form, and the vastly larger part of which was past before mind appeared on the scene. Moreover, when it has appeared, it must be explained in terms of its antecedents, so that there seems to be no basis for dividing the world into two parts—minds and objects—but rather the necessity of keeping the process uniform in nature and in operation. The process and its products must have been *there,* in a realistic sense, long before there were any human minds to give it laws or to enter into its constitution. In such an emergency religion could still fall back on the idealism which found purpose or the self-revelations of spirit as the guiding force in the process, and which spoke of the progressive development of higher forms in the evolutionary history.

Even this refuge of idealism and religion was swept away by the principle of natural selection.

> Thus the play of natural forces, by the addition of slight differences and without design, leads to the formation of organized structures that are progressively qualified to cope with the circumstances of life. By a sort of *coup d'état* those very aspects of life that had served the theory of intelligent design are now made to wear the livery of mechanism.[1]

[1] Perry *op. cit.,* p. 25.

Just how devastating these ideas were to the traditions of both idealistic philosophy and Christian theology can be seen by considering another statement of Perry in the same condition:

> Both pagan and Christian philosophy had taught that nature could not be adequately explained without resort to a principle variously known as "purpose," "final cause," "Providence," and "design." Now, all of these moorings seemed to be dissolved into a flood sweeping blindly on without origin, destination, or fixed landmarks.[1]

Spencer passed beyond even this picture derived from the biological sciences and sought to state in a single formula a theory of nature derived from both physical and biological sciences. He offers for this purpose his well-known definition of evolution:

> Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.

The result of this picture of nature, when combined with the picture developed by the physical sciences, in accordance with which the amount of matter and energy in the universe is constant, and in which explanation for every event is stated in terms of its antecedent causes, could not fail to

[1] Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

be a reaction toward a realistic view of the world, at least in the first instance. It presented a world, complete within its own skin, whose processes were so far from being the creation of reason that they were themselves the explanation of the presence of rational creatures. Here, at last, and "at the end of ages," was a world which reason might discover and explore, might even turn to some account, but which at the core was hard and inexorable and independent.

"Naturalism"—for the realists do not wish to be completely identified with this point of view—was for the most part either agnostic or positively hostile to religion. Darwin could not see any place for a providential God, nor could he be satisfied with the notion that a spiritual power had imposed laws on matter, nor could he make any positive religious statement which satisfied him. Huxley's agnosticism is an indication of the same difficulty. Spencer's "unknowable" is scarcely more satisfactory from the standpoint of religion, even though he does undertake to show that science, no less than religion, is face to face with the same "unknowable." Haeckel, Büchner, and others occupy positions more critical of religion.

It was out of the persistent realism of common sense, the realistic tradition which was never completely silent, and the scientific development which also inspired naturalism, that current real-

ism arose. It is perhaps indicative of the difficulty of fitting religion into such a world as results from these considerations that the realists have not dealt with the subject to any great extent. Aside from Bertrand Russell, whose "Free Man's Worship" was first published in the *Independent Review* for 1903, the most important publications of the realists on the subject of religion are very recent. Just what the postulates of current realism mean for religion it is impossible to say, and the best indication of this is the fact that there is a wide divergence among the realists themselves in their attitude toward religion.

Bertrand Russell's position is best known. In "Free Man's Worship," he says:

> That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built.[1]

[1] Russell, B., *Mysticism and Logic* (1918), p. 47.

Although this has now been written twenty-five years, Russell would no doubt say of it what he said in the preface to *Mysticism and Logic* published in 1918, that

> the general attitude toward life which is suggested in that essay still seems to me, in the main, the one which must be adopted in times of stress and difficulty by those who have no dogmatic religious beliefs, if inward defeat is to be avoided.

Russell would keep separate the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of value. That is the subject matter of physical science, and has no concern with value; this is human, and must be kept within the limits of the human world. To imagine that we can give cosmic significance to value judgments is to deceive ourselves. It is much the same sort of procedure as that of a cow feeding near a railroad track which runs from the train as if it were after her. In fact, the train is simply proceeding in a perfectly blind way under the control of the forces which are acting upon it, and it has no reference whatever to either the good or ill fortunes of the cow. So nature, proceeding on its way, may appear to us as a frightful or beneficent object, it may cut across our path, and may bring bane or blessing, but there is no purpose, no plan, in all its doings, nor is there any human or divine feeling aroused in nature by any results produced in the human world. It

is the part of wisdom, therefore, to understand the locus of our concepts, and to use physical concepts in their proper context, and value concepts in their sphere.

Whitehead, on the other hand, reaches an opposite conclusion. Value, for him, pervades nature. Indeed,

> value is inherent in actuality itself. To be an actual entity is to have a self-interest. This self-interest is a feeling of self-valuation; it is an emotional tone. The value of other things, not oneself, is the derivative value of being elements contributing to this ultimate self-interest. This self-interest is the interest of what one's existence, as in that epochal occasion, comes to. It is the ultimate enjoyment of being actual.

It would be easy to misunderstand such a statement as the above by supposing that such terms as "self-interest," "self-valuation," etc., limit the statement that to "be an actual entity is to have a self-interest" to self-conscious human beings. In Whitehead's context, no such limitation is intended. On the contrary, value is inherent in any actuality at all.

Whitehead begins his chapter on "God," in *Science and the Modern World,* with this statement concerning Aristotle:

> Aristotle found it necessary to complete his metaphysics by the introduction of a Prime Mover—God. This, for two reasons, is an important fact in the history of meta-

physics. In the first place, if we are to accord to anyone the position of the greatest metaphysician, having regard to genius of insight, to general equipment in knowledge, and to the stimulus of his metaphysical ancestry, we must choose Aristotle. Secondly, in his consideration of this metaphysical question he was entirely dispassionate; and he is the last European metaphysician of first-rate importance for whom this claim can be made.

The significance of this statement lies in the fact that Whitehead completes his own metaphysics with God. Whitehead rejects the concept of Prime Mover, with all it implies of First Cause, etc., and calls God "the ultimate limitation," or the "principle of limitation." [1]

The sustained argument through which Whitehead is brought to the use of God in the completion of his metaphysics is long and involved. It is scarcely possible to understand it without following him through most of his writings. In his *Religion in the Making* he has attempted a statement as free as possible from terminology which makes it hard to follow its more technical statement in his other works. The important thing about Whitehead, however, is the fact that he finds God at the end of his metaphysics, and gives to religion metaphysical significance. He holds that the

religious insight is the grasp of this truth: that the order of the world, the depth of reality of the world, the value

[1] Cf. *Science and the Modern World,* p. 249 ff.

of the world in its whole and in its parts, the beauty of the world, the zest of the life, the peace of life, and the mastery of evil, are all bound together—not accidentally, but by reason of this truth; that the universe exhibits a creativity with infinite freedom, and a realm of forms with infinite possibilities; but that this creativity and these forms are together impotent to achieve actuality apart from the completed harmony, which is God.

It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that all this is of positive value for any particular religion or religious theory. It may well be that he has himself stated the limitations of his own position, so far as it has significance for religion, in this comment on Aristotle:

> It did not lead him very far toward the production of a God available for religious purposes. It may be doubted whether any properly general metaphysics can ever, without the illicit introduction of other considerations, get much farther than Aristotle.

But at least this is true: We have in Whitehead a philosophy which makes the completion of a philosophy of nature dependent upon the introduction of religious considerations, whereas in Russell we have a philosophy which requires that nature and religion be stated in terms which keep them separated. It is this fact which makes it necessary to say that it is not possible as yet to determine what the postulates of current realism mean for the purpose of an interpretation of religion.

It must be evident that idealism and realism have at least one thing in common. They are agreed that in the last analysis religion is either true or false. They present us with a metaphysics, talk of the nature of reality, and consider the relation of religion to the universe. When Russell divides the philosophy of nature from the philosophy of value, making the former refer to an order of nature and the latter refer to the experience and hopes of men, he insists that he is stating a point of view which gives religion a very limited value. Whitehead is in complete agreement with Russell in the judgment that if religion is of significance only in the experience of men, it has a very limited significance in that experience. With this judgment the idealists also are in agreement. Religion, in the judgment of both idealists and realists, must be given a cosmic interpretation if it is to be any real home for the soul of man.

On the other hand, there has been in philosophy, almost from its beginning, a strain which denies the possibility of demonstrating that any of our ideas have cosmic significance. Philosophy cannot be dismissed without taking account of her skeptics and agnostics. Particularly is this true of modern philosophy, and, within modern philosophy, of the English tradition. From the time of Francis Bacon and his insistence that there are

no greater hindrances to knowledge than the worship of idols, among which none are more powerful than the idols of the theater, there has been a core of skepticism and agnosticism in the greater part of English philosophy. This point of view has sometimes been favorable and sometimes unfavorable to religion. Its chief concern is stated by Locke:

> If, by this inquiry into the nature of understanding, I can discover the powers thereof, how far they reach, to what things they are in any degree proportionate, and where they fail us; I suppose it may be of use to prevail with the busy mind of man to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our capacities.

Locke adds, not without a sense of humor,

> It is of great use to the sailor to know the length of his line, though he cannot with it fathom all the depth of the ocean.[1]

In his attempt to measure the "length of his line" he reaches the conclusion that it is all too short to allow us to measure "the depth of the ocean" of reality. We do have knowledge "wherever we perceive the agreement or disagreement of our ideas; and whenever we are sure those ideas

[1] Locke, *Essay on Human Understanding.* Cf. Introduction.

agree with the reality of things, there is real knowledge." But *to be sure that our ideas agree with the nature of things,* there's the rub! We can be sure that our simple ideas have such agreement, but our simple ideas are, in all probability, only an infinitesimal portion of the simple ideas possible to such beings as have senses capable of receiving most or all the impressions which objects could make upon them. Moreover, experience can show us that some connection between our ideas exists, but what the conection is, experience can never show. If there be a judgment of religion from such a point of view, it will be necessary to turn away from metaphysical implications and discuss its functions in experience, its agreement and disagreement with other "ideas."

Locke saw only part of the implications of his appeal to experience. His "experience" was in large measure an affair of knowing, as Dewey would say, whereas actual, concrete experience is an affair of knowing—sometimes and under certain conditions—but it is also an affair of enjoying and suffering, loving and hating, being exalted and being abased, being perplexed and being confident, and many other things besides. The movement of thought known as English Empiricism had serious limitations as a result of this cognitive conception of experience, but it left a critical

problem for anyone who would give metaphysical status to a theoretical system.

It is well known that Kant declared that a science of metaphysics is impossible, and, as a consequence, that proof of the existence of God, of the immortality of the soul, and of human freedom, is impossible. None the less, what it is impossible to prove, we must still postulate as the basis for explanation of the moral life. In other words, we must turn from the cosmos, from existence, from metaphysics, to the facts of experience, and to the *a priori* conditions of the possibility of experience for a philosophic treatment of morals and religion.

> I cannot even make the assumption—as the practical interests of morality require—of God, Freedom, and Immortality if I do not deprive speculative reason of its pretensions to transcendent insight. For, to arrive at these, it must make use of principles which, in fact, extend only to objects of possible experience, and which cannot be applied to objects beyond this sphere without converting them into phenomena, and thus rendering the practical extension of pure reason impossible. I must, therefore, abolish knowledge, to make room for belief.[1]

The belief, however, still projects the concept beyond experience into a noumenal world which is hypothetical. "We have but faith, we cannot know" may thus be either a shout of triumph, a plaintive refrain, or a gesture of impatience, de-

[1] Kant, Preface to second edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*—Meiklejohn's translation.

pending on what one would like to find in "the world," and on how strong is one's heart in the presence of one's baffled reason.

One way of meeting the difficulty suggested above is the production of a metaphysics and the demonstration of knowledge. In one way or another, idealism and realism accept the challenge and undertake the demonstration. The pragmatic point of view seeks to escape the necessity of a metaphysics without denying the fact of knowledge of a fundamental sort. James made use of "the world of pure experience" in accomplishing this purpose. He proposed a "radical empiricism," in which the knowledge function is performed by any "feeling" or "idea" which "points to," "refers to," or "terminates in" another feeling or idea, and so refers to the other as to be verified by it. Any "feeling" with this pointing or referring quality gives, so to speak, "a promissory note," signifying that under certain conditions a given "feeling" will be presented. The feeling so presented is the "cash value" of the "promissory note" given by the first feeling. If and when the cash value is received, the first feeling is declared to have performed the knowledge function correctly, is verified, shown to be true.

James developed this statement of the function of cognition and the meaning of truth from his psychological studies, and stated in *The Function*

of Cognition[1] "In short, our inquiry is a chapter in descriptive psychology—hardly anything more."[2] It is evident that James made a similar attempt to avoid the metaphysical problem in his chapter on "The Self" in his *Principles of Psychology*. It was no more than an extension of this method of avoiding the metaphysical question which prompted James, when he undertook a discussion of religion, to discuss "The Varieties of Religious Experience." The significance of this method of James's lies in the fact that it requires a philosophical study of religion to consider the *history of religion* rather than a *metaphysical theory of the cosmos.*

A similar point of view was reached by Dewey, partly as a result of a similar interest in psychology, and partly derived from the impact of the evolutionary concept. Dewey has also demanded a "cash value" for ideas, but the terms in which such cash value has been stated are not "feelings" or "ideas" so much as they are "solution of problems," and "method of adaptation." Experience, in a broad sense, is the "commerce of a living being with its environment,"[3] and is inclusive of the environment in so far as commerce

[1] Read before the Aristotelian Society, December 1, 1884, and first published in *Mind*, vol. x, 1885. This is significant.
[2] *Meaning of Truth*, p. 3.
[3] Cf. Dewey's article in *Creative Intelligence.*

takes place.[1] The cognitive phase of our experience arises at such times and under such conditions as present difficulties which have to be surrounded and call for a needed adaptation. The cognitive function is performed when any portion of experience is taken as the key to the solution of the problem, and the adaptation is made as a result of its being so taken. The significance of every system of thought must be stated in "instrumental" terms, which terms can only be supplied by the *history* out of which they arise and in which they perform an adaptive function. The functional value of ideas in history, as opposed to the metaphysical status of the things conceived, thus becomes of primary importance.

It is evident that this point of view has done two significant things which are important for a philosophical treatment of religion. In the first place, it has determined the locus of knowledge, and by determining it has limited knowledge to a position in experience, in opposition to former empiricisms which have made experience itself practically synonymous with "cognitive" experience. In the second place, it has affected knowledge with interest and value, by virtue of the fact that it is no longer considered the end and outcome of a process of inquiry, but is considered rather

[1] Cf. *Experience and Nature* for a statement as to the inclusiveness of "experience."

as an intermediate stage in a process of experience which points beyond itself to some end or ends for which adequate means must be provided. As a result of these things, the attention of philosophy is turned from the metaphysical status of the concepts and objects of religion to the history of the religion, considered as a part of the history of the people among which, and the conditions in which, the religion, with those concepts and those objects, developed.

When philosophy thus turns from the metaphysical to the historical inquiry, it is no longer possible to ask the general question, Is religion true? Such a question has no meaning. The question must be broken up into specific parts, and the inquiry concerns specific ends sought after—ends which are ends-in-view, as Dewey would say. How far are these ends local and temporal, and how far persistent and continuing? Are they consistent with other ends sought after then and now, and if not, which are more fundamental—fundamental being defined also from the point of view of history? How are the means related to the ends, and are they the "best"—that is, the most adequate—means for accomplishing such ends. In other words, the inquiry is not a matter of the truth or falsity of religion, but is a matter of its comparative worth.

The attempt to determine the *worth* of religion is in vain, however, unless we are first provided with a metaphysics, it is objected. Whitehead says:

> It is a curious delusion that the rock upon which our beliefs can be founded is an historical investigation. You can only interpret the past in terms of the present. The present is all you have; and unless in this present you can find general principles which interpret the present as including a representation of the whole community of existents, you cannot move a step beyond your little patch of immediacy. Thus history presupposes a metaphysic.[1]

Whitehead tells us in a note on the same page that by "metaphysics" he means "the science which seeks to discover the general ideas which are indispensably relevant to the analysis of everything that happens." We thus have a neat little problem. We cannot interpret the past, and thus determine its worth, until we have discovered—not just *sought to discover*—the ideas indispensably relevant to the analysis of everything that happens, and we cannot move a step beyond our little patch of immediacy for the purpose of discovering those "indispensably relevant" ideas until we already have them. What we shall probably be forced to do is—go fishing!

The last remark is not meant to be either ir-

[1] Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, p. 84.

relevant or impertinent. It is meant to be suggestive of the fact that we do go right ahead interpreting the past, judging of its worth, choosing between this and that on the basis of their comparative values, just the same as if the metaphysicians were not telling us that it is quite impossible for us to do so until they have finished their inquiries. One might almost say that if there be any function which is ubiquitous, it is the value function. It is present in our choice of professions, wives, automobiles, vacations, and beefsteak. And there is always something final in such choices. We choose *ends,* though they may be ends-in-view and "what we have written, we have written," in each case. These choices and values may be subject matter for the metaphysician, but they certainly are prior to metaphysics. It may turn out that they furnish a way out of the "little patch of immediacy" in their own right.

The question at issue here is far-reaching. Does a philosophical treatment of religion require, as a prolegomenon, a system of "ideas which are indispensably relevant to the analysis of everything that happens"? Or may philosophy consider religion a form of experience or experiencing, and seek to evaluate it in terms of the rôle it plays in history? The question is important for religion,

but it is even more important for philosophy. If we adopt the former alternative we must set out upon the metaphysical pilgrimage even though we are aware that from the beginning of philosophy until now we have had that question before us without being able to find any solution for it. But whoever accepts the burden of a metaphysics as a prolegomenon to a philosophy of religion must do more than reckon with the *fact* of its difficulty. He must also reckon with Hume and Kant, who have discussed its theoretical difficulty. The adoption of a mathematical logic and of ideas drawn from contemporary science may relieve certain difficulties, but these critics of the possibility of metaphysics remain to be reckoned with. If we adopt the second alternative, we may have other difficulties, but we at least escape those peculiar to the first. If we accept the former, and reach the conclusion that knowledge is limited in possibility, we land in skepticism; but the limitation in the second, being one of function, leaves knowledge real and significant in the affairs with which it is concerned.

Those who have adopted this alternative have considered religion as an integral part of experience. As Dewey says:

> Pre-philosophic selections and arrangings may not be final for reflective thought, but they are significant for it. The

bias they manifest is not that of the closet or library, but of men who have responded to the one-sided pressure of natural events. The key to the trends of nature is found in the adjectives that are commonly prefixed to experience. Experience is political, religious, æsthetic, industrial, mine, yours.[1]

Experience being such, philosophy has the same function with respect to any one portion as to another. If it be correct to say that experience becomes cognitive at such times as present difficulties or require adaptations, and if the function of knowledge is the solution of difficulties and the facilitating of adaptation, then it would seem to be true that philosophy becomes the servant of religion as a result of its internal and external difficulties.

This way of considering religion has been affiliated here with the position of Bacon and the skeptical tradition in philosophy. The justification for such treatment lies in the fact that it abjures metaphysics—although there seems to be some glancing in that direction recently—and is suspicious of finalities. Its suspicion of religious finalities is only a special case of its suspicion of finalities in general. There are *ends* and *finalities,* but they are specific, not general; in-view, not behind the scene. Whatever may be the final judgment of history, it at least clears the atmosphere

[1] *Experience and Nature,* p. 15.

of much that is scholastic and obscure to have Bacon revile the *idols of the theatre* and William James propose a radical empiricism. But both Bacon and James were pointing out that the finalities and absolutes of science and those of religion are in the same boat. Absolutes had better hang together, or they may hang separately.

Religion from the Standpoint of the Ethical Culture Movement

JOHN L. ELLIOTT received his L.B. degree from Cornell University and his Ph.D. degree from the University of Halle. He became identified with Dr. Adler, who was developing the Ethical Culture Society. He is an instructor of ethics in the Ethical Culture School of New York City and a leader in the society. He organized Hudson Guild, a settlement in New York, where he is the Head Resident.

VI. Religion from the Standpoint of the Ethical Culture Movement

by John Lovejoy Elliott

ON THE outside of the Ethical Culture Society meeting-house in New York City the legend stands: "This building is dedicated to the ever increasing knowledge, love and practice of the right." For me the essential words are "ever increasing," for they bear a sense of hope and faith in the worth of the present and of the future, and of this faith our time stands much in need. As to the significance of the word "right" we should mean by it only what any man may mean who uses common speech—what most people would mean by right in judging events of history.

Inside the building, over the reading-desk, there is another sentence: "The place where men meet to seek the highest is holy ground." This phrase gives a different orientation and supports a more religious trend of thought, but it does not indicate the sole purpose of an ethical society.

For more than fifty years ethical societies have included in their membership agnostics, atheists,

and theists. Anyone is welcome as a member who is interested in promoting a better way of life, and he is not asked to adopt any creed, official philosophy, or metaphysics. He is welcome if he is interested in the purpose and activities of an ethical society; it may be its practical work, its educational undertakings, or its Sunday addresses, which cover many themes. During the more than half a century of the movement's existence, work has been done in various fields, including those of schools, education, philanthropy, social reform, and politics; nevertheless the religious point of view is central. Leaders of the ethical societies perform for their members some of the functions recognized by religious organizations, such as those of marriage and the funeral service. And there has been a certain growth in the development and understanding of the personal and spiritual problems of life; a certain point of view relative to religion has been developed which is the theme of this paper.

Dr. Felix Adler was the founder of, and has been the chief worker in, this movement. The addresses and writings growing out of his experience in the movement have found a definite place in this and other countries. They have been translated into French, German and Japanese. Dr. Adler as Roosevelt professor in Germany, as well as in his professorship at Columbia University

and as Hibbert Lecturer at Oxford, has expressed a certain point of view which is essentially religious. One does not think of Dr. Adler chiefly as a man who has written, nor as a man who for more than half a century has spoken from his platform on Sunday mornings, nor as the founder of schools which have been the pioneers in education, nor as a man who has taken a great part in the labor, housing, and political activities of his time. The outstanding characteristic of his life is his complete dedication to an ideal. Dr. Adler impresses those who know him best as a see-er, if the word were not so commonplace I would say a prophet. He never speaks as one primarily trying to teach others. The hearer rather gets the impression that he is trying to think out for himself how things really are and how they should be. In the sweat of his brain, in the travail of his mind, in the growth of his spirit, he has lived and worked, and in not any of his achievements, but rather in the steadfast devotion to his aim, has he best expressed himself and developed the idea of a spiritual religion based on ethics.

There are others who have written and spoken in this ethical movement. Percival Chubb of St. Louis, Horace Bridges of Chicago, Alfred W. Martin of New York, and William Salter, whose books are especially worthy of note. In Europe the movement has been represented by Harry Snell

and Dr. Stanton Coit in England, Professor Wilhelm Foerster and Professor Gyzicki in Germany, Professor Jodl and Dr. Wilhelm Boerner in Vienna. But Dr. Adler has been the chief worker. His interest has always been essentially religious. When he returned from study abroad as a young man he expected to become a rabbi, perhaps the successor of his father in a New York synagogue. The congregation was enthusiastic about his first address, but it was later discovered that the word "God" had not been mentioned in the course of it. And when Dr. Adler was asked whether this was accidental or intentional, he simply withdrew his candidacy, and soon after he left the synagogue altogether.

He was profoundly interested in all matters of religion. But he left the temple, and passed by the church, to seek in human experience those spiritual satisfactions that his nature more deeply craved than it craved anything else. And he has found, as near as words can describe it, deepest satisfaction in what may be called the religion of ethics.

Now, no one will accuse Dr. Adler or anyone else of taking a stand on an ethical or a religious ground merely because it is a popular thing to do. Indeed, it was early said to him, that morality is just the thing that people dislike most. The old religions have their magnificence, their over-

whelming dramatic and emotional appeal, their pictures, their temples, and their glorious music. Ethics has none of these. It has today only its appeal to truth, which in modern times has been construed chiefly in the terms of science. And yet ethics is very closely allied both to traditional religious thought and to the field in which the intellect claims to be supreme. Those of us who accept the ethical point of view no doubt believe that there is a field where the intellect is rightly supreme and where no other authority should be sovereign. And yet we can no more believe that from the achievements of the intellect alone a man can build a faith than that a man could climb over a mountain range just by the use of his mind. The climber has to use all the mind he has to guide him, and yet his physical strength, his will, his emotions, all have to be used so that he may get over the mountain. So, too, in finding one's way through life the intellect is supremely necessary. But alone it is not enough. Human life can never be truly comprehended by considering only those elements which the intellect presents, although it cannot be understood without it. On the other hand, the ethical movement undertakes to continue a certain tradition worked out by religion. We may not accept the would-be-factual account of the world or of man as given in the Bible. But we are much interested in, even de-

pendent upon, certain insights into human life found in the Hebrew and Christian traditions. There is nothing less dispensable, as regards guidance for a way of living, than certain things that have been seen and promulgated by the Hebrew prophets and by Jesus. Other nations have made great ethical contributions, but none of them have been more rightly influential than Israel.

What was the essential contribution of the Hebrews? It seems to me that it was their recognition that there is such a thing as a spiritual community among men. This is an idea that has been stated in many forms since that time. What an influence it has had even in America! The Puritans assuredly were more Hebrew than they were Christian. If Abraham Lincoln wanted to convey an idea impressively he was very likely to do it in the language of the Old Testament. He turned to the Old Testament rather than to the New because the problem before him, and of his time, was national rather than individual. Over and over again in Lincoln you get either the words or the significance, "as it has been said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said." Jesus received the heritage of the idea of a spiritual community among men. He both accepted it and changed it. His teaching has had the power to create saintly individual lives, but never to create good nations. Whether he intended it or not, the

effect of his teaching has been intensely individualistic. His message went beyond the borders of his nation and out into the world, where it has been expressed mainly by individuals and non-political groups seeking salvation through a better way of living. This pressure toward a better way of living was so strong on the people from whose midst the Bible came that, like other primitive peoples, seeing a meaning in life so little realized in human actualities, they created the idea of an all-holy God and enthroned him among the stars and beyond the stars. As to the nature of this God, there were always many differing opinions. But there was always one function which God had: *He was the willer of that which should be.* In this, I would say, he was the symbol of the deepest experience of human beings.

The test as to whether men are religious or not has always been whether they did or did not believe in God. Now, I should say there is a deeper test than this, and that is the belief in the moral capacity of human beings, belief in the spiritual nature of men. I have known many good men who believed in God. I have known many good men who did not believe in God. But I have never known a human being who was good who did not believe in men. I would say, then, that faith in man was more fundamental than a faith in God. The essential thing is the way we deal

with one another, in the way we see each other. There has always been a profound limitation implicit in the God idea as expressed in the Hebrew and Christian religions. The idea of oneness has everywhere been paramount, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God." It still sounds in Hebrew temples, and it is taken as an axiom by Christianity. But this idea of oneness seems no longer to cover satisfactorily the religious ground. We have been moving into a new universe infinitely larger, vastly more extensive in space and time. They used to tell you neatly that the universe was six thousand years old. Now they reckon the time of the earth alone in hundreds of millions of years. Exploration into the very small, into the atom, is even more wonderful. New forces totally unlike those of our past experience are emerging, and even beyond this the complexity and fundamental unlikeness of the elements composing man's world have to be coped with. And yet the idea of all-absorbing unity remains, although in the practical affairs of people the old idea of unity becomes less and less of use. The theory on which so much of our law was built was that of the king. The unified state could only be expressed in the monarchy. Now the modern development of democracy has shown that the kind of government the people want, and can have, is that in which sovereignty is not in the

hands of one single human being, but is shared by the whole people.

It has become axiomatic to say that the just powers of government are derived from the consent of the governed, that the people are the supreme authority. Kings have been superseded; in the same way for many people the idea of the nature of God has changed. The trend of philosophy and science has been toward the idea of a difference as well as of a unity, each being of equal importance. And just as the idea of sovereignty and the idea of the universe have changed, so, too, has the idea of the essentially best, which men have called God or Spirit. According to the Hebrews, to be right was to follow the law of Israel, the exemplary nation. We have come to believe that there is no such thing as an exemplary nation. The white people cannot be a perfect example to the black, the brown, or the yellow, nor they to the white. We begin to believe that there is a gift in each of these peoples. No matter what may be our indebtedness to any one nation, Hebrew, English, American, what not, there is a kind of difference in the worth which manifests itself in them. In Christianity, the perfect example is supposed to be a single Christ, and yet increasingly we come to believe that there is something essentially precious in the soul of each human being, a certain distinctiveness; while

there is unity, there is also a difference. No figure of a man can be a perfect example to a woman, to a mother. It is misleading to say merely that you should try to love your neighbor as you do yourself. It is right to try to love him as much as you do yourself, but not in the same way. When it comes to dealing with a person essentially different from you you cannot treat him as you would be treated, because each of you is a different entity. Qualitatively, love has to be different. You have never met with a nature just like your own. There can, then, be no single perfect, exemplary nation or individual. Just as God the King, so God the Father, is not a workable term for modern thinking people to use. We cannot ask children to think of God as a Father, particularly as they regard their fathers today. The idea of unity, taken alone, has bred the idea of uniformity. And the idea of uniformity has long blocked progress, and it is doing so today in the family, in the nations, and in races. Perhaps there is no greater cause of conflict in families, in industry, among the nations and races, than the attempt to achieve unity through uniformity, through an insistence that the element of likeness is the only supreme element. The idea of the value of difference in individuals, in nations, and in races has to be recognized before we can have any surer peace or profounder harmony.

Now, this idea of difference is not only a matter of philosophy, it is also a matter of practical experience. When you sit down face to face with your boy or with your girl, with your partner, your friend or your wife, or with some man whom you are trying with all that is in you to help, you do not sit there as a Christian or a Jew, or even just as a father. You sit there as a man, prepared to give every bit of help you can from mind and knowledge and experience, all you know and all that you have tried to do. You seek to sense how things look to that other soul, to that other mind, and if you succeed in this then you perceive that things really do look different from what they look to you, and if you can catch the significance of that difference, then you may indeed be of some help. Every experience in life is profoundly original and calls for a new insight. You cannot better a situation by a general rule only, though you can be helped by it. What calls from you your deepest and your best when you and another person have got so much at stake, is a sense of uniqueness, a preciousness, and you must think of that and perceive it not so much with the idea of shaping it as with that of giving it a chance to be itself, its best self. And this whether you are sitting facing your own loved child in your own home or, let us say, sitting face to face

with a man in a death house who has been condemned to execution for some capital crime.

The gist of developed thinking in the ethical movement could be put in this way: the most important thing in the world is the way you see people, the most fundamental and characteristic thing about the moral life is a matter of what you see in others. There are many ways of looking at human beings. It was once said to me that the most important thing about a man is the fact that he occupies six feet of space. That statement recurred to me whenever I have visited the Museum of Natural History in New York and looked at one of the cases which have been arranged to demonstrate the composition of the human body. Here is a manikin which is meant to represent you or me or any other human being, and beside him are the component parts of the body. There is a huge phial of water, a small phial of phosphorus, a quantity of carbon, and the like. When you have looked at these substances and weighed and measured them, then you can say in very truth, this is what a man is! If you add certain substances, such as poison, he decomposes; if you add certain other things, like those contained in food and in water, he maintains his form and movement for a certain length of time. There are schools of science and so-called philosophy that attempt to show that this

creature, man, is purely a mechanism dependent on substance and supplies.

There is another way of looking at man and that is in the sense that he is an animal. Man is an animal, needs food, shelter, exercise. He has the power to be nourished, to reproduce, and to act. Here again is a way of looking at man that has been supported both by science and philosophy and that dominates our own time. For many people the sum total of the teachings of evolution leads to nothing else. But the fact of its dominance has given me a sort of reluctant sympathy with the anti-evolutionist and the Ku-Klux Klan! Blind and ignorant and wrong-headed as they may be, they do at least oppose those who say man is descended from some ape-like animal, and no more. Of course one cannot oppose science in its field. Mrs. Partington with a mop was a reasonable woman in comparison with people who would undertake to do that. Yet in all of our animadversion on those who try to prevent the teaching of evolution, I believe it would be well for us to consider the reason of their apparently willful ignorance. Certainly they need to learn a great deal about life, but I believe that those who call themselves scientists and evolutionists neither have gotten the whole truth nor have they the only ability needed to judge rightly the essen-

tial nature of human beings and the real significance of human life.

Again, there is a group who say that the distinctive characteristic of man is not that he is a thing or an animal, but that he is a thinker. This notion is one which is found in the classic period and it returns from time to time. It is essentially an aristocratic idea. Aristotle said, "Man is a thinker." Some of the testers of the intelligence quotient in children have had much the same idea and back of it is the judgment that those who cannot think greatly are not so worth while as the people who can. Of course, we are dependent on those who can find for us new paths of progress and new ways of living. But the number of those who are highly intellectual, those who can do creative thinking, in any community is not great. Judging by this standard, we should have to say that most lives are failures—that in the great majority of cases nature's experiment in making people has been a failure. There have been a few, from Plato or Aristotle to Bergson or Einstein, who could think greatly, but there have not been many of them. Hence might the aristocratic point of view be: let the few supermen think, appreciate art, exercise rule. There are those of us who cannot accept that, who find a far deeper significance in the expression that there is "an uncommon good in every common man." This

is the point of view which it seems to me is the truly ethical one: that there is worth or possible worth in every one.

It has been said that some people have souls and some not. From this point of view I should differ radically. It is true that there are some, perhaps a good many, first and last, in whom the finer things of human nature have never appeared. But we are entitled to postulate that there is a fineness there, to assume that in every common man there is an uncommon good. Act on that principle and see what happens. Something always happens to anyone who shapes his life in this way. He is brought to a higher manner of living. In proportion as you bend down and help up a fellow creature, you rise yourself. And while the postulate may be based only on faith, yet the practical and actual effects are unquestionably a matter of experience. The essential and worth-creating thing in human nature is neither material, animal, nor intellectual: it is the interconnectedness with other lives, and this is the spiritual factor and principle out of which all religions of the past have arisen and which is the supremely important factor in the life of any man. If those of us here knew we were to live not longer than this single day, of what would we be thinking? Would it not be the life we have had with other people and the future we have

tried to build with them? As people rise in the scale of worth so grows the sense of their interconnectedness.

I have on occasion asked students in schools to arrange groups in an ascending and descending scale according to the worth of the occupation of each group. They began with the day laborer; below that they placed those whose lives and work are predatory—the gambler, the thief, the more dangerous criminal. Above the day laborer, they put the skilled mechanic, the tradesman, then the professional workers—the doctor, the lawyer, the artist, the scientist. I asked them also to choose a representative of each group, some man or woman whose life and work are particularly characteristic of the occupation or profession. Almost inevitably, as they reach the top of the scale, they choose some statesman like Lincoln, a prophet like Isaiah, a founder of a religion like Jesus. And I have little doubt that not only these young people but the great majority of men would judge of mankind in some such way. They would so evaluate both groups and persons as to put at the top those who felt themselves most essentially connected not only with those nearest to them, but also with those who were at the bottom of the social or accepted moral scale. If we can say at all that some men are on a higher level than others, if we can place certain persons at the top

and forefront, it is only for one reason, and this is that they more than others recognize their complete interconnectedness with other human lives and especially have they expressed their interconnectedness with those lowest in the common grading of humanity. Lincoln felt a kinship to the slave; Jesus proclaimed his relationship with the evil-doer, the publican, and the sinner.

This attitude, which is characteristic of the best, is the one which should characterize all. The place of the father in the family, for instance, exemplifies the essential human relation. The father is not there simply for his own good. He is a good father just in proportion as he helps every other member of the family to grow toward the best of which he or she is capable. A right fatherhood is based just on this social, spiritual function. And in the larger world a man's function as a man, as a human being, is dependent on the same thing. He has a right place in the world just in proportion as he helps others to realize their place and their function. The lawyer, the doctor, the merchant, the teacher, has his function just in the same way. The idea of helping others to perform their proper functions, to live their proper lives should be seen as the supremely important thing. Thus the help anyone may and should give to any other will not be simply help given in time of misfortune, of be-

reavement, of death, it will equally or more be help given in the field of life, activity, daily occupation.

Without being revolutionary, the ethical movement is profoundly radical in its method as well as in its aim. It does not say that the spirit is something which naturally withdraws into an inner world, but rather that a person is spiritual in proportion as he advances here and now in this present world of work and of thought, that thus alone can properly be expressed the essence of man's spiritual nature. Just as the artist on his canvas paints symbols of the spiritual nature, in harmonies of color and form, so all of us can express the reality of the spiritual nature in our relationships, whether they are those formed at home, in the office, the factory, or the workshop.

Too often the good that is represented by goods has been thought of as the most precious thing in the world. Yet we all know that it is only a very poor human being who puts his possessions first. It is a bad social state that places interest in things before interest in people. And while this may not wholly describe the actual situation in which we in America find ourselves, there is too much truth in the statement that materialism dominates our national life. Yet that this materialism is not so utterly dominant as it may

sometimes seem is indicated by an experience which I will cite by way of illustration. Like many other social workers, I have come to know something of the relations of capital and labor. I have been an arbitrator in labor disputes, but, as helping to harmonize the differences of capital and labor, this is not the most fruitful possible kind of work. I much prefer such opportunities as I have had in the School for Printers' Apprentices. Here representatives of capital and representatives of the labor union have together built up an institution which is an organic need of this common industry. There have long been trade schools founded by philanthropists or educators, but this is an organization created by a group representing both employers and unions. Here they have become partners; they work together not only because of the common need for better operatives in the factories and better members in the unions, but also because they sense the needs of the younger workers and apprentices, the boys, the young men who are just entering this field of industry. This school has become one of the largest printing schools in America, perhaps in the world. It at once meets a practical need and establishes a social principle and precedent.

We need a better understanding of the nature and ideals of democracy, just as we need a better

understanding of the ideals and nature of religion. Sometimes when men have lost their faith in the church as the means by which a better life on earth might be achieved, they have turned to a faith in democracy, but this faith, too, has often broken down. There is a growing skepticism today in regard to the nature and worthwhileness of democratic government. As we look about us in our great cities, in New York, in Pittsburgh, in Chicago, or recall recent history as enacted at Washington, this skepticism seems almost justified. Democracy has not accomplished all that was hoped of it, it has not justified all the faith which it inspired. It, too, has attempted to achieve unity through uniformity. Meanwhile democracy, equally with religion, rests on a spiritual basis, upon a faith, and here, also, a new vision, a deeper understanding of the spiritual nature of man, can alone create a power such as shall achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace both among ourselves and among all nations.

Notwithstanding the reverence which I have for the old religions, I yet believe that we must come to be religious in another and a deeper way. A new spiritual ideal must find its expression in family life, in industry, and among the nations, and this spiritual ideal will recognize the importance of difference equally with unity. I believe

that the socialized idea of the divine has the power not alone to fulfill the aspirations of the past, but also to create a new power and new sanctity in the future. It is this socialized idea of the divine which the ethical movement is attempting to realize and cherish in the world.

Religion from the Standpoint of Judaism

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VII. Religion from the Standpoint of Judaism

by Samuel Harry Goldenson

IT IS obvious that if any incompatibility is perceived to exist between religion and the modern mind, the clue of it is to be found largely in ways of thinking which are characteristically modern. The use of the mind is itself not an exclusively modern adventure, for man has used this instrumentality more or less throughout recorded history. In fact, recorded history is an unmistakable evidence of the use of the mind, however much we may underestimate or even deprecate the particular nature and quality of that use. What troubles us during these days when we contemplate religion either from the standpoint of history or of value arises, therefore, not so much from its contact with mind itself, but from our new mental preoccupations and outlooks. What is feared is that religion cannot dwell in the same mind that harbors the predilections, opinions, doubts, and convictions that appear to be characteristically modern.

In order, however, to determine whether the

conflict between the modern mind and religion is real and inevitable, and, therefore, bound to lead to an ultimate rejection or radical change of religion, or whether this clash is only apparent and passing so that the two may be brought together by reinterpretations, can only be determined first by a precise understanding of what constitutes the exact qualities and temper of modern thought that seem to threaten the life of religion.

The points of stress between the modern mind and religion have to do, first of all, with the contents of that mind—that is, the knowledge that man now has or believes he has about the nature and structure of the universe. This new knowledge, arrived at through astro-physical and physico-chemical studies, has been so startling and unsettling as completely to shake man's confidence touching the nature of reality and of his own place in the scheme of things.

The nature of the skepticism occasioned by this new knowledge is so radical that a recent writer describes it as totally nihilistic. Its eye is not upon particular religions and faiths, but upon them all alike. So thoroughgoing is it that it is even able to grant that religion may yield temporary values of an illusory nature, but its insistence is all the stronger that there is absolutely no ground for it in the heavens above, on the earth below, or within the heart of man. This

new skepticism is claimed to be not a temperamental aberration, nor the expression of a passing mood induced by mysterious circumstances, but is deliberately regarded as a necessity arising from all that is now known of the physical universe and from taking account of the origin and nature of the processes of thought and reason.

The aspects of the new knowledge of the physical world that are assumed to be most embarrassing to religion spring from the recent discoveries of science relative to the size and structure of the universe. These new scientific achievements have contributed enormously to man's technological mastery of his physical environment. This mastery is so prodigiously great compared with the practical skill of former generations that the modern man realizes now as never before the extent to which knowledge is power. This seems to be fast becoming the ruling principle and conviction of our times. It is rooted in the newer approach to the elements of the universe which calls for a thoroughgoing and radical understanding of the nature of things which, when achieved, nets one the ability to predict their behavior. To know a thing is to be able to trace its characteristic behavior in fields of dynamic contexts, and such knowledge enables the person to assimilate unto himself the power exhibited in those fields.

So far, so good, but, unfortunately, success and

power often have psychological and moral effects for which experience with the objective physical environment need not be held responsible. A man may learn the principles underlying any machine and may be able to achieve the technological mastery needful for its construction, and yet he may remain sane, and more or less humble, particularly in the presence of poets and prophets, artists and philosophers. The curious effect of the new technological mastery is that it gives to so many individuals a cumulative sense of the power that all of them together have in their various fields of research and activity, and results in a type of scientific self-sufficiency that is fast becoming characteristically modern. The important thing to know is that at bottom we are dealing with the psychology of success and power, and when these seem to be achieved through a knowledge of the structure and function of things, one's feeling of sufficiency is still further strengthened. There are many forms of power. There is power of an altogether brutal character, as muscular strength; there is power that one derives indirectly from the authority of others; and then there is power as here described, that is drawn from the essential nature of things, and it is because this last type of power appears to spring from the abiding structure of things that pos-

session of it invests one with a sense of his permanent tenure.

And yet there have been wise men who seem to have been able not to overlook the distinction between the technological mastery of the elements of the physical universe and the nature of one's own total character. Such wise men have been able in the face of accomplishments, though not as great as our own, to keep in mind experiences and interests that can transcend achievements in the physical environment. I have in mind the 28th chapter of the Book of Job, in which this author, strangely enough, deals with the same problem and comes to the conclusion that no matter what man's achievements are in the physical world, they cannot claim to satisfy his entire nature. He may discover silver and gold, he may take "iron out of the dust and brass out of stone," he may even "set an end to darkness" and "search to the furthermost bounds," and yet the question will still remain as to "where wisdom may be found" and "where is the place of understanding." With all that the deep may yield, it will have to say "wisdom is not in me" and with all that the sea may contain, it will have to answer "understanding is not with me." Whence, then, cometh wisdom and where is the place of understanding? Death and destruction say, "We have heard the rumor thereof" and they that look

to the ends of the earth, and see under the whole heaven proclaim: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil, that is understanding."

One of the results of recent investigations that seems to have disturbed man most is the discovery of the unthinkable size of the universe and the undreamed-of complexity thereof. I use the word unthinkable in the most literal sense, by which I mean that our thought processes are found to be altogether inadequate to yield any appreciative sense and grasp of it. Until recently we thought we had some adequate notion of time by taking the movement of our earth in its orbit as a standard of measure. Now, the earth and its movements, seen in the light of astro-physical discoveries, are so tiny and so insignificant that to try to understand the magnitude of the universe with the aid of these measures seems to be as absurd as it would be to attempt to compass the visible world, not to speak of the invisible part of it, by looking at it through a pinhole with the naked eye.

What we have found about the unimaginable size of the universe, we have also learned about the infinite complexity thereof, and the sum and substance of this new knowledge has been to bring serious doubts of the nature and of the existence of God. In a word, what this seems to amount to

is a rather simple notion, after all, and that is that the universe has been found to be too big and too intricate for God. These doubts and suspicions would indeed have a very valid ground if beforehand there had been definite, fixed, and unmistakable knowledge of the character, ability, and capacity of God. If we believe that a certain job is or will be too big for someone, it is because we know already what that person's limitations are. My thought is that in the problem before us, we know, or seem to know, the size of the job, but who is there that can claim to know the precise nature of our divine candidate? However, I am inclined to believe that the great historical religions, not to speak of Judaism only, have foreshadowed and anticipated this very problem when they described God as infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient. Shall we be told that God's infinitude is relative only to a smaller universe, his omnipotence relative only to a universe less difficult and less arduous to administer, and that his omniscience is relative only to a less intricate and less complex one?

To me it seems that the problem now sensed by certain modern minds is not altogether new. It has certainly been felt by the profounder minds recorded in Scripture. When the Psalmist, addressing his God in the language at once of personal humility and of adoration, declared: "For

a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night," who will doubt that he meant to convey the thought that human interests and experiences cannot form the measure either of God's capacities or of his limitations? If this same Psalmist were writing today, he would most likely make the disparity between God's time and ours appear much greater; but the difference is, after all, a matter of more or less, while the underlying thought remains the same. If we turn to Isaiah, we find that he, too, warns man not to make his limitations the measure of God's nature. For this prophet puts into the mouth of his God the statement, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." What if the modern astro-physical scientist should inform Isaiah that it has been recently discovered that the distance between the heavens and the earth is greater than was thought in the sixth or seventh century before this era? Do you think that the prophet would balk at the use of this simile? Would he not rather say that these new discoveries furnish him with a more adequate measure of God's pardoning grace, for the context here is with reference to God's mercy? In the 139th Psalm, in which the author envisages the magni-

tude and the wonder of the universe, but not too great and too wonderful to manifest the presence and providence of Deity therein, this poet, speaking to the Lord of this universe, said: "Thou understandest my thoughts from afar." Shall the modern mind interpolate the phrase "but not too far"?

It will be noted from the passages just cited that there is a profound difference between the early cosmological chapters of Genesis, which still seem to trouble the minds of some modern scientists, and the conceptions of the infinity, transcendence, and imminence of Deity as voiced by the Psalmist and Prophet. The fact is that Jewish religious thinking has never concerned itself very much with the nature and origin of the physical universe. Its appeal to the heart and mind of man has not been on the basis of ontological speculations. The supervening quality of Jewish thinking is most pointed and conclusive in the 19th Psalm which begins with praise of the Deity manifested in the glories of the heavens and immediately passes on to the exaltation of him as the one whose law is perfect, restoring the soul; whose testimony is sure, making wise the simple; whose statutes are right, rejoicing the heart; whose commandments are pure, enlightening the eyes; and ending with the prayer of spiritual inwardness and self-searching, "May the words of my mouth and the

meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

Besides the so-called problems raised for religion by reason of recent discoveries of the structure of the universe, there are questions that spring from what we have learned, or believe we have learned, about the nature of man. The scene now shifts to a stage upon which a much more difficult conflict is set up, for, rightly understood, the attack upon religion that is most threatening and damaging is from those persons who feel that they are warranted by their study to regard the human being as a mere thing, a thing among things and even less, a sheer episode, though of a chemico-physical nature—whatever such an episode means. The particular episode called man is conceived to be subject to the same laws, forces, and conditions as control all other episodes. This view, by one stroke, silences every religious profession and, more than that, kills every attempt to interpret life as anything other than a stream in which every particle flows—just as it flows. But startling and menacing as is this point of view for much of the things that many of us hold dear, it is important to point out that this conception is not altogether new in the history of human thinking, and that at bottom it is of a piece with a double quest that has been going on for ages—the search for continuity in the uni-

verse, on the one hand, and for substance as the bottom reality, on the other.

As nature is said to abhor a vacuum, so the mind of man has abhorred any thought of discontinuity in the phenomena presented to it. This is the meaning of the attempts to view life as a mode of chemical reaction, and in turn to interpret the psychical as a mode of life now chemically conceived. Thus it is assumed that continuity is installed within the whole of the universe and established for evermore.

But continuity alone, as remarked above, is not the only desideratum. What the mind seems to crave incurably is to get to the bottom of things. As the search for the start of things was described by Kant as the "infinite regression," so the attempt to reach the bottom of things may be described as the "infinite egression." And the result of this process seems to be an infinite "demotion" of the various entities that for a time seemed qualified to bear the load of the universe. There was a time when the atom held that honored place, then the atom was demoted in favor of the electron, then the electron itself was found to be too crude to perform a job so intricate and complex, and it had to give way to energy, and now it appears that energy is not refined enough for the task, so that the latest proposition is that we turn to mathematical symbols as the substratum

and texture of the universe. Shadow of shadows, saith the super-modern mind, shadow of shadows, all is shadow! If there is anyone besides the very latest mathematical physicist that is pleased with this most recent achievement of human thought, I believe it must be some mediæval scholastic philosopher who would now be able to rise in our midst and exclaim, "I told you so. Did I not insist upon the doctrine of *Creatio ex nihilo?*"

And yet, one cannot but issue the warning that it is one thing to break up our everyday world—the world in which we live and move and have our being—into mathematical symbols, as Professor Eddington has pointed out, but it is quite another thing to take these symbols as the only and sufficient realities for daily living. Moreover, it is equally important to point out that through this process of infinite decomposition, not only do religion and religious values pass, but if man continues to hold his eye fixed upon the last stages of such thinking, all things else pass, including the very eye that is a witness to this grand dénouement. When a man gets to this point it is time for someone to dash cold water into his face and wake him up. For, curiously enough, it seems to be as possible to think ourselves into a sleep of obliviousness to surroundings as to be drugged into utter insensibility. Such is the great paradox that

lies at the heart of all human exclusive preoccupations with the play of ultimates.

What, now, does religion, and in particular Judaism, say about this dissipation of life and thought, of hope and faith, in a sea of symbolic nonentities that starts from nowhere, goes nowhere, and yet is all in all? It utters its inevitable and everlasting NO. This protest is not merely an expression of the love of sanity or even a rebuke to the arrogance of the intellect, but rather the irrepressible cry akin to that issued by a living thing when faced by a death-dealing blow. It is the unmediated voice of life itself. What religion says, and certainly what Judaism says, is that the most significant thing about human life is human life, and no amount of analysis, no amount of imaginative or vicarious decomposition of a living organism, will either explain or explain away the amœba's appetite for living or satisfy the human being's craving for living meaningfully and significantly.

However far the intellect might pursue its quest for a reality that it may be able to describe as one and the same throughout the universe, certain ineradicable differences remain. And when all is said and done, thinghood, on the one hand, life for the living, on the other, and "meaning" which characterizes the life of man, are not mutually interchangeable terms. And even if these three

should be regarded as related in origin and generation, each succeeding stage marks a fatal step forward, in that the specific kind of forwardness has become of the very essence of its being. Once a thing achieves life, it will not of itself return into mere thinghood, and when life achieves meaning it will not of itself return to mere living.

In the recorded history of man, Judaism is a name given to a certain type of attempt to satisfy this very human craving for meaning and for significant living. Behind Judaism is the human spirit and the experiences of the human family, in so far as these became a heritage of the people known as the Children of Israel. In the economy of the human family, the Israelites found themselves endowed with certain predilections for moral values and sensitiveness to preoccupations with matters of a social and ethical character. This, of course, does not mean that every event that took place in Jewish history, and every thought entertained by the Jewish leaders, and every word spoken or written by the teachers of Israel, would satisfy our moral standards, but it does mean that taking the people as a whole, and viewing their writings and their history from the standpoint of the type and direction of their thinking and the quality of leadership to which they looked for ultimate inspiration, one cannot

doubt that this people seem to have had within them an urge to moralize and socialize life.

This particular urge is not, however, fully described unless we point out two qualities of it which have given the people of Israel a distinctive place in the spiritual history of mankind. One is the intensity and profound earnestness that characterizes much of the ethical thinking of the people that wrote the Bible and the subsequent commentaries upon it. Human differences are, in the very nature of the case, not differences of kind, but of degree. Other peoples, too, notably the Greeks, did much thinking and much valuable thinking about ethics, but somehow this thinking is not characterized by the same quality of earnestness and by the same passion as is found in the writings of the Bible.

In the Jewish Scriptures we find no dialectical approach to the meaning of justice, of charity, of mercy, of forgiveness, but rather a concrete realization that human beings, because of their frailties or their ideals, their needs or services, have various claims upon us, which claims are described by these respective moral terms. Prior to the precise definition of ethical terminology and infinitely more important than this interesting and valuable exercise, is the feeling that human beings depend upon us for cheer, comfort, fairness, hope, and love. The chief moral prob-

lem, therefore, as it appeared to the Jewish thinker, did not fall within the field of intellectual perceptions or capacities, but in the realm of the will (volitional strength). It is for this reason that the central appeal of Jewish moral thinking is to the heart and the will, the mood, the temper, the spirit: "Serve the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

This brings us to the second distinctive feature of the Jewish attempt to give meaning to human life, and that is, the conviction that behind the moral order and within the claims of moral values is a Will greater than he who is the temporary participant in the social and ethical scene. This Will seems to have been felt by Israel in the persistence, authority, and compulsion of the right. The belief in God in the writings of Israel is not arrived at through speculative thinking nor through admiration of the wonders of the earth and sky, but rather through an intuitive understanding of the significance of the OUGHT that lies in the heart of human beings.

It is out of the heart of Jewish thinking that such an experience described as "the call" is realized—the call to service, the call to heroism, the call to loyal self-forgetfulness, the call to sacrifice. What is this call but the realization that one's moral convictions are not private and personal, to be destroyed at will as a man may squander

his own property, but that they have a source greater than the individual and to which he is linked through a system of significance and value that it would be worse than death to him to deny. The story of Moses at the burning bush, regarded as fact or fancy, has the same significance. Though away from his people and living in the comfort and security of his distant home, Moses still hears the cry of his suffering brethren in Egypt. He turns to see whence the cry issues, and he sees a bush burning and with a flame that is not being consumed. This is an objectification of the unquenchable flame which symbolizes the undeniable claim that his sorely stricken brethren have upon him, and he cannot withhold his services as leader and champion. As with Moses, so with the rest of the prophets of Israel. They never come upon the scene as sophists or as academic students of the questions of right and wrong. They come to the gates of the city, to the sanctuaries, and even to the courts of the kings as advocates, as pleaders, as champions, as witnesses, and their appeal is always one and the same—TO DO—because they carry in their minds the image of concrete human beings who are wronged and who suffer and sorrow.

The emphasis upon the moral law as a call for self-disciplined and beneficent action is the golden thread that runs through all Jewish thinking.

When the children of Israel, at the foot of Mt. Sinai, are described as receiving the Law and the Commandments, the writer informs us that the language in which they accepted their obligation was, "All that the Lord had said, we shall do and hear." When the question arose as to the source of the Law by which Israel was to guide its life, this people was informed:

> For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.[1]

Here once more, we see an emphasis upon deed.

As in the books of Moses, so most certainly in the prophetic writings, the emphasis upon righteous deeds is the primary concern of the religious leaders. To the well-known question of Micah, "What does the Lord require of thee?" the answer is, "To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." And when Jeremiah, finding himself troubled by the burden that the claims of justice and righteousness put upon him, is tempted to throw off the yoke, then he reports

[1] Deuteronomy 30:11-14.

to us that the word of the Lord was within him like "a burning and consuming flame" and he had to speak. Here is the finest and noblest expression of Jewish religious thinking. We see in it the linkage of the moral law with God, the God of one's righteousness, as one of the psalmists phrased it when he prayed to the "God of my righteousness."

The supreme contribution of Judaism to the significant life of mankind is to be found in its emphasis upon the claims of the moral law in all social relations. Accordingly, this emphasis calls for the discipline of one's own desires and appetites and interests. If I were to define Judaism in one sentence, I should say that it is a way of living, morally disciplined, and transfused by the consciousness of God. Let me hasten to add that this is no new conception or interpretation, for we find that an ancient rabbi also boiled down Judaism to one sentence as I have tried to do. His attempt may also have been made in order to satisfy the modern mind of his day. The difference between him and me is, however, that he found his sentence ready made and of which mine is but an echo. The ancient rabbi referred to the book of Habakkuk, where the prophet says of the righteous, "The righteous man lives by his faith." What a neat utterance to set forth the distinctive quality of Jewish spiritual thinking. What is this

faith but confidence that the spiritual Being that underlies the universe is the eternal guarantor of the ultimate triumph of righteousness.

At this point I recall that recently a learned professor found fault with the Hebrew conception of a personal God because such a conception could bring him no comfort. I do not quarrel with him on that ground. If that conception brings him no comfort, it brings him no comfort. What interests me is the substitute that he offers: Instead of the God of Scripture he would have "a cosmic spirit, benevolently inclined toward intelligently directed human effort." This satisfies him more. I have thought considerably upon the real difference between the spiritual Being spoken of above whom the Children of Israel chose to think of as Father, and the cosmic spirit of him who speaks for the latest mind. The only difference that I can discover is that our professor would rather refer to a spirit endowed with benevolent recognition of human intelligence as "it," while we think a more appropriate and more appreciative pronoun is "he" or "she." To me it seems that the conception of the cosmic spirit held by Isaiah or by Jesus is as much higher than that held by this modern teacher as the implications of "he" or "she" are higher than the contrasting implications of "it."

For the vexing problems of humanity Judaism

prescribes the disciplined life. That is what we believe is meant by Law or Torah in Jewish writing, for this term is so often linked, if not interchanged, with a term meaning commandment. But lest the discipline should become too formal and rigid, Judaism never fails to warn man of the necessity to look upon life in the light of ever higher interests and of more inclusive values. "In thee is the fountain of life" said the Psalmist; "in thy light do I see light." And Israel is furthermore reminded that the perception of higher values is not possible unless man creates within him a pure heart and renews a right spirit.

Moreover, because Judaism's primary and imperative interest is in life itself, here on earth, a certain realism pervades its thinking, the realism born of practical experience and issuing in a very lively appreciation that the ends of human life, however good and noble, cannot be achieved without the aid of intelligence. So strong is this conviction that one of the greatest of the ancient rabbis declared that "No ignoramus can be a truly pious person, nor can an untutored individual be truly religious."

This conception at once explains the pursuit of learning in the entire history of Israel, and it also explains a certain tendency to free-mindedness. When one puts human life in the center of his thinking and places the well-being of one's fel-

lows above every other consideration, a revolution takes place in all of one's attitudes and interests. The welfare of man becomes the solvent through which are melted away all fixities that limit and hinder mutual understanding and helpfulness.

But when all is said, the net service rendered by Judaism to the world is through the rôle played by the prophets of Israel in preaching and exemplifying the doctrine that human problems, primarily of a social and moral character, will never be solved except through a sense of personal responsibility expressed in willingness to make sacrifices. To the modern mind Judaism says very simply—as long as man suffers from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune caused by man's inhumanity to man, as long as the human heart craves for enlargement and suffers from thwarted purposes and unfulfilled ideals, as long as there is a craving for beauty and truth and goodness, man will seek to find appropriate ways of thought and action to compass these cherished ends, and in doing so he will always want to feel that there is something in the universe that will support him in his efforts and sustain him in his difficulties as he marches to the goal. The self-discipline needed for the task and the faith and confidence in the support that lies within and behind the universe, these together spell religion, and I believe always will.

This concluding thought, expressed in the language of the Psalmist and given in the spirit of counsel is, "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness and trust in the Lord." Trust in the Lord for what? To give to such a way of life universal meaning and cosmic support, and to such moral and spiritual endeavor, social sanction and personal peace.

Religion from the Standpoint of Christianity

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VIII. Religion from the Standpoint of Christianity

by Francis John McConnell

WE SOMETIMES fall into the error of supposing that Christian lands are more religious than other lands. In truth, however, irreligion is more likely to prevail within the confines of Christendom than outside. For almost all activities of the non-Christian lands are in one way or another connected with religion. There is more religion to the square mile in India, or China, or Africa than in England or America. In those non-Christian lands religion has from the beginning touched all parts of a man's daily life. It has its demands even as to the food he shall eat and as to the manner of his cooking it. In China, where religion is so largely ancestor-worship, it determines practically everything. The Chinese live with the idea of an actually existing community of spirits always watching their least deeds. In Africa, witchcraft, or something akin to it, is in the thought of the native from the rising of the sun to its going down—and all through the night. In mere extent and volume of reli-

giously-determined conduct the non-Christian nations far surpass the Christian. The non-Christian peoples have their gods, and have them in abundance. They take the service of those gods with the utmost seriousness. In those old days when the Hebrew prophets were laying the foundations on which Christianity was afterward built, the prophets had to meet the question as to whether the people of Israel were as genuinely devoted to their God as were the heathen peoples to their deities. Here was a so-called heathen just returning from an altar on which he had slain his child as propitiation of his god. Now we can say all we please about the callousness of those whom we call heathen, but the sacrifice of the first-born indicates that those sacrificing are at least taking their religion seriously. There can be no doubt that there has always been religion aplenty in so-called heathen lands and that such religion has always called forth the utmost sincerity on the part of its worshipers.

What, then, is the difference which marks off Christianity? Simply the kind of religion. The difference is in the quality rather than in the quantity—so to speak. In a word, Christianity aims at a moral religion—at a moral idea of God—a moral idea of man, and a moral ideal for his contact with his fellows. If Christianity is not moral it is nothing. At the center of the system,

inherited from Judaism, stands the idea of a moral God, striving to lift men up into likeness to himself.

We hear a good deal today about religious conceptions as projections by the human mind upon the universe. Men seek to control their environment—hence the invention of tools to control the physical environment and the invention of beliefs, which are likewise called instruments, to control the spiritual environment—the beings and forces with which man at least imagines himself in touch. It was the immortal service of the Hebrew prophets that in seeking for a key to unlock the secrets of adjustment to the universe they took man, especially in his highest reaches of capacity, as that key. They interpreted human welfare in terms of the largest and finest moral life, and saw in the good man, or the righteous man, the best path to adjustment to the problems of life. In so doing they did not provide for adjustment in any smug and easy fashion, for conscience is restless and calls always for larger and larger devotion. Long before progress as such was even thought of, the possibility of an individual's or people's turning from evil to good, or from good to better, had been part of the spiritual possession of Israel. It was a belief peculiar to that Judaism out of which Christianity came, that the truest adjustment to the world was a realization that

there is no adjustment except that of moral intent to use the world for the best life.

In shaping the prophetic ideal, the leaders of Israel relied somewhat upon observation of the effects of moral courses but more upon direct moral insight. They thought of God as rewarding or punishing nations for good or bad conduct, and the rewards or penalties could be seen in the visible course of the nation's history. Deeper than this, however, was the direct insight which came out of their attempts to make moral their thought of God and of man. They conceived of the righteous man as made in the image of God, his righteousness giving a clue, however faint, to the righteousness of God. The contrast between the religious conception of Israel and that of heathenism has never been better set forth than in the question and answer of Micah, the question, "What doth the Lord require of thee?" and the answer, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good." Recall the circumstances. As I said a moment ago the nations around about Israel were giving themselves to self-sacrifice, especially the sacrifice of children. Many pious hearts in Israel must have been sadly perplexed as they asked themselves whether they would be willing to sacrifice a son to a deity as did a king against whom Israel was fighting, or whether they would be willing to seal up a baby in the foundation stone of a

house to win the blessing of a deity upon the house. The records seem to indicate that some in Israel, led astray by the example of manifest devotion on the part of the heathen, did offer their children in sacrifice. Now there can be no doubt that the heathen religions—and I use the term without disparagement—did and do show themselves moral in their willingness to do what they thought they ought to do. The rub was and is in what they ought to do, and Micah's answer was not argument, but appeal to direct insight as to the worth of the ideals of justice and mercy and companionship with a God conceived of in moral terms.

On this basis of a mankind which can reveal the good, the true, and the beautiful as incarnate in human life, Christianity looks to a Divine Person in whom these glories are fully realized. A distinguished student of non-Christian systems has told us that it is amazing to see how many of those religions, when they come to symbolize their deities, do so in some form of serpent or dragon figure. This does not necessarily mean that they think of their gods as actually existing as serpents or dragons, but that they exalt serpentine or dragon qualities, which can hardly be called moral at all in any intelligible sense. The Hindu religion, which places the sacred cow at the center of worship, can indeed teach effectively that men

ought to worship the cow, but anything with a cow more sacred than a woman at the center of it is not moral in the Hebrew or Christian sense. At the center of the Christian belief is the driving power of a feeling of oughtness—taking the direction of an enlarging moral ideal—dynamic arising out of the conviction that the universe and the Power back of the universe are themselves constitutionally moral. Christianity refuses to believe that men are puppets jerked by unseen wires. The determining forces are spiritual.

Now this high morality is distinctive of Christianity. I do not wish to indulge in sweeping statements, but it does seem as if many, if not most, of the non-Christian systems make their deities by a process of adjustment to things as they are, and do not take the idea of things as they ought to be as the path to the understanding of the divine. It is easy to see how inevitably this occurs in lands where man is helpless in the presence of the vast natural forces. Take a tropical land where the heat is irresistible. Religion takes the form of making life as comfortable as may be under the circumstances. Or take a land where the food of man is dependent upon the regular seasonal blowing of a wind which brings the life-giving rain. Suppose the wind fails. There is nothing man can do about it. Or suppose that for some other reason famine and pesti-

lence, utterly beyond man's power, sweep off human beings by the million. Religion in such ease is likely to consist in fatalistic shaking of the head and saying, "When my time comes it comes," with as much grace as possible. Or, on the other hand, if conditions are easy-going, the gods of whom men think are likely to be easy-going and to partake of the easy-going qualities of men. Nevertheless, even into these lands Christianity comes with its strenuous insistence on the binding force of the moral ideal.

The method of Christianity is that of faith—faith first of all in the soundness of moral venturing in the name of the highest ideal. It frankly recognizes the indispensability of the will-to-believe, in the search for religious truth. A scientist has recently told us that the difference between science and religion is that whereas religion depends upon the will-to-believe, science depends upon the will-not-to-believe. This thinker set the spirit of trusting faith which marks Christianity over against that of questioning skepticism which marks science. The contrast as thus sharply stated is not real. Science comes down at last to assumptions which it accepts on trust, and religion has at least now and again recognized the duty of careful scrutiny of what admittedly rests on faith; but both the will-to-believe and the will-not-to-believe have to do with

will, and will has to do with choice. Every once in a while—in fact almost continually—we are reminded that Christianity cannot prove in strict scientific or logical fashion the existence of God. Well, suppose we had a God whom we could see and recognize by our eyes and ears, and suppose men came into the Kingdom of God because they could see God by eyesight and not by insight, by good physical vision rather than by purity of heart. We should then have in the Kingdom hosts of men who had come for prudential reasons, who had simply seen that, beholding a visible God, it was better to be on his side than not. There might not be a ray of understanding of God in any high sense. Many of such citizens of the Kingdom might inwardly desire to be outside and would go outside, except for the inhibitions of common sense. What kind of city of God would it be, many, or any, of whose citizens secretly hankered to get out, and who would go out except for the material loss of going out? Or suppose we had a Kingdom of God made up of logically-minded thinking machines, who had captured God in a syllogism, without having necessarily the least moral interest in him. No, if we are to have a Kingdom of moral venture, the certainty of the Divine Existence will have to come through moral conviction, accompanying moral devotion. What kind of Kingdom of Heaven

would it be if it were composed largely, or at all, of a lot of heresy-hunting dogmatists who should seek to reserve the chief seats for those who assent to merely intellectual propositions? Any Christian finding himself in such a realm might well ask as to whether he had not got into the wrong place. The only Kingdom of God worth having is that of devotion to high moral and spiritual ideals on their own account.

On the basis of faith, Christianity seeks to make the most of man—or of men, women, and children. We hear much today of human values as good on their own account, and some of us seem to think these values are a new discovery. A writer of distinction has dated the appearance of these values as significant for modern times as late as the period of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment—to the French Revolution and Rousseau's ecstatic rejoicing over humanity when it is free from oppressive institutions, and to Kant's doctrine of man as an end-in-himself. Far be it from me to discount Rousseau and Kant, but the human values, in the sense of the surpassing worth of men, had been discovered long before their time. Even the Christian doctrine that man had been ruined by the Fall put a greater worth in the human than did the thinkers of the Enlightenment. Depraved as man might be, he was not beyond hope of rescue, and was worth saving.

If the Christianity of the time before the Enlightenment thought, however mistakenly, of the virtues which Rousseau saw, as merely the ruins of mankind's true nature, how great must have been that nature? It will be remembered that Horace Bushnell, though not accepting the orthodox idea of human depravity, once preached a mighty sermon on the "Dignity of Human Nature as Revealed in Its Ruins." Kant wrote without reference to theology, but Christian thinking would, I am sure, accept today his doctrine of men as ends-in-themselves, never to be used as means, or tools, for the advantage of man or God, without their own free consent, as the ideal which it has at least been trying to phrase from the beginning. Christianity seeks to make the most of men.

It is first of all from this point of view of the worth of man that Christianity refuses to believe that man is the product and outcome of merely impersonal forces. If the universe is at the center impersonal, then the Indian religions are right which preach the loss of conscious life as the highest good, for life can never reach the highest good in an impersonal universe. It will always be haunted by the lowliness of its origin and the ignominy of its destiny. Of course, there is just now an immense mass of literary output which preaches the virtual depravity, or at least

worthlessness, of man. Some of this is an echo of utterances like those of Herbert Spencer, who told us so gravely forty years ago that no matter how fast thought travels, light travels faster, in utter obliviousness of the essential consideration—namely, how does it happen that thought knows how fast light can travel, or that thought can compare anything with itself? On the Spencer hypothesis, if a ray of light should become conscious of itself and take to thinking about itself, it would not in that thinking have attained to a power superior to that of running fast. Thinking about running fast is inferior to the running itself, according to Spencer.

Besides the scientists, who by the exercise of unparalleled intellectual power have discovered the worthlessness of intellectual power, we have the present-day social students, especially those of the romancing biographical school, who tell us that man's life is mostly sex-reactions, and a low order of reactions at that. Now in the presence of all this, Christian teaching falls back upon that scientific will-not-to-believe to which I have just referred. All the modern claims as to the limitations of men may be sound enough, but Christian thinking refuses to believe that they tell the whole story. Inasmuch as we have to make ventures at best, Christianity makes the venture of holding that in the nature of man we have the best key to

the nature of the universe. We do not claim that the key unlocks every door, but it unlocks some doors and our power to unlock any encourages us to believe that after a while we can unlock the others.

Now someone asks why go beyond the human values which we admit. Let us take those values as practically the best, do the best we can for man, and let it go at that. No one could gainsay a measure of soundness in this advice, for the chief duties of the present hour are practical —but the advice is not altogether sound. For we cannot stop, in religion, just with practical duties. Some men nearly all the time, and nearly all men some of the time, do raise questions as to the meaning of the universe: so that the problem of the best line of approach to the queries becomes religiously important. It depends a good deal upon the estimate we put upon personal life. If we see in such life something more important than the play of impersonal forces, we use personal life as the key to the Force back of the universe. Here again we have to do with values, and in pronouncing on any values aside from those that can be actually weighed we have to will-to-believe or will-not-to-believe. Moreover, as soon as our friends really become dear to us we cannot help protesting against the view of the world which would make personal elements the least conse-

quential of the forces which play around us. As soon as we see how much thought counts with ourselves, and with the community of persons among whom we live, in bringing our best selves out into expression, we cannot help raising the question as to the meaning of thought for the whole universe. Indeed, as far as thought is concerned, the scientists of even the most materialistic tempers weave reason into the heart of things. They may talk about the limitations of reason, but they practically make reason unlimited. The physicists have done away with hard-and-fast matter of the lump variety. Atoms are by no means little spheres of impenetrable stuff. They are centers of immense activities—activities so powerful that if just a few of the atomic centers got out of control we might find even the solar system wrecked. There is nothing at all, of the material kind, under these forces; the forces themselves are the material. The only support and base for them are the laws according to which they act, and the head and center of these laws of physics are mathematical equations. Now when a man's deeds are governed by mathematics we certainly do not think of him as mindless. The astronomer speaks of distances as measured in "light-years"—a light-year being the distance a ray of light can travel in a year, moving at the rate of 186,000 miles a second—and then the as-

tronomer fluently refers to "light-years" in terms of millions. Mind rules, according to the astronomer, as far as infinity's edge, at least in the sense that mind can always use its counting apparatus.

In spite of themselves materialistically-minded scientists have to assume that the universe is ordered by mind throughout. By the fact itself that they announce to us their discoveries they put mind in a central place. If they rule out mind, they have to do so in the name of mind.

Moreover, even the materialistically-minded have to admit something much like moral responsibility in the forces of the universe. They assume the regularity of the operations of law, as if there were something in the universe that could be counted upon. That impersonal law should act regularly is considerable of a mystery. The world might do all sorts of crazy things and never cease to act according to law. The atomic and physical proprieties might all be preserved in a universe acting like a lunatic. The materialistic scientist, however, simply will not have it that the universe acts like a lunatic, or that it acts irresponsibly. In spite of all he says about the indifference of the universe to human interests, he nevertheless assumes a responsibility of the laws to be consistent with themselves. However this consistency got to the center of things, it seems

to be there, at least in great enough degree to allow the scientist to carry on his experiments.

Consistency like this is admittedly far, far short of the moral responsibility which Christianity insists upon as constitutional in the universe, but it points in the right direction. Which leads on to the remark that we arrive close to the heart of Christianity when we discern its emphasis on the idea that power and responsibility must go together. If we are to conceive of the universe as mind, then that mind must act under responsibility. Here is a mark of much heathenish thinking both outside and inside of Christendom. Paganism has had gods of a kind—feasting on Olympus or elsewhere—utterly regardless of what might happen to their human offspring, except as those offspring might find shrewd or cunning expedients to attract their attention. Gods have been conceived of as the begetters of men, with no trace of the responsibility which Christianity puts into the idea of creatorship. If Christianity is right as to the nature of the Creative Force, that Force is under the heaviest moral bonds in the universe for the utmost success in right moral outcome.

It is this high conception that Christianity dares to hold about God. Christianity admittedly ventures beyond the realm of proof in thinking of

the universe. It thinks of God in the boldest leaps. This peculiarity is back of the doctrines which the Church has taught about Christ. Theories about Christ, especially when phrased in the speech of centuries ago, can be made to appear very inadequate, but what they finally reduce to is that the moral qualities in God are of more importance than the metaphysical, that we are to think of God in terms of Christ and of man in terms of possible approach in likeness to Christ. Take even the theological dogmas hardest to make anything of, those having to do with atonement. All alike mean this, that the salvation of men is of vast concern to God, and that God does all he can to save men, saving them to the largest and fullest intellectual, emotional, moral life.

I said at the outset that religion began in the attempts of men to relate themselves to their environment, especially that unseen environment which they thickly populated with all manner of spirits. Perhaps it would be better to say that they sought control of the unseen environment for the sake of controlling the visible environment. In any case, Christianity accepts the challenge of the visible environment and is preëminently a practical religion in its attempt to bring about visible results.

The outer world is, in the thought of Christianity, at all times becoming more mysterious and more intelligible, paradoxical as such utterance is in itself. There was a time when Christian leaders thought they knew all about the purpose for which the universe had been created. It had been intended for man's purpose alone. Whatever hard and stern features there were in creation had been caused by the fall of man. The increasing realization of the size and age of the universe, however, made this belief untenable. The sufferings of animal creations who lived and died hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of years on earth before man appeared, could hardly be attributed to man. The existence of stars thousands of "light-years" away from the earth must have some purpose beyond giving the human intellect opportunity for reflection on astronomical immensities and for exercise in mathematical ingenuity. In the large we do not know what the material universe is for. It becomes more of a mystery with every attempt to bring it within the scope of our philosophy.

Yet at the same time that it becomes more mysterious in its ultimate meaning, it becomes, at least in the parts that we can get hold of, more responsive to human purposes. We realize today that it is impossible fully to understand the material world, that it is impossible to retreat from

it or to ignore it, that it is ignoble to bow down and allow it to ride over us. Remains then the possibility of controlling it for the highest conceivable human purposes, and that, Christianity seeks to do.

Chistianity accepts the challenge that the control of the material world gives the best proof of a religion's moral genuineness, especially as men relate themselves to one another in the production and distribution of material goods. The more we study the conditions out of which Old Testament prophecy, poetry, apocalypses and law, and the New Testament Gospel, arose, the more sharply we discern that justice and mercy and mutual respect and coöperation in the search for, and use of, material things are of fundamental importance in any religion which is to be taken seriously at all. The social question, so called, by which we mean the problem of all human contacts, especially those arising out of men's relation to the material world, is the essential test. It is possibly not too much to say that Jesus was very patient with those who held mistaken ideas of God, and patient with those who would not accept his own leadership, but that his severity was without limits for those who held heretical views of their fellow men. The great heretic, in the teaching of Jesus, was the rich man whose

heresy consisted in having the wrong place, or no place at all, for Lazarus. The deadliest sin, from the point of view of the Gospels, is greed, and it is the victory over greed that true Christianity always sets itself to win.

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